



California Wild Sheep

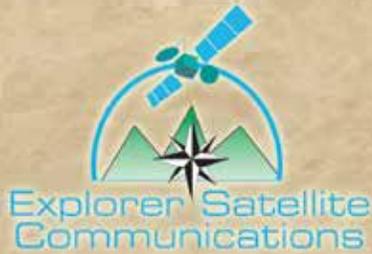
Winter 2015



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**Magnificent Rams
(and ewe)
in a Yet To Be Surveyed CA Range.
Piute Mountain**



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



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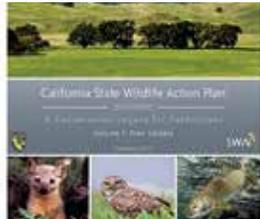
From the Editor's Desk

Glorious Fall is now making way for Winter (and hopefully rain and snow for our ultra depleted and dry state). I hope you have enjoyed some good hunting and that many of you (me too) have further plans. I had hoped to have a DBH hunting story from the lucky tag holder in the Whites, but alas he was unsuccessful on a self guided hunt. In this issue, you will find some great hunting stories from nearby states and provinces, fun humor, a teaser about our 2016 Banquet and Fundraiser, interesting desert insights from Carlos, insights from CDFW, words of wisdom from Dick Weaver, 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 for the 1Q16 issue is February 20.

California State Wildlife Action Plan now final



CDFW's vision for conserving the state's wildlife is to sustain the floral and faunal biodiversity of California over the next decade, and to establish a solid conservation framework for the decades that follow.

Included in the actions that will be used to do this are:

- promote hunting and fishing as a conservation tool to use when working to eradicate or control invasive or non-native game species;
- educate the public about wildlife conservation issues, including hunting and fishing as conservation tool, and inspire a conservation ethic in present and future generations through public outreach;

Even if you do not read the entire SWAP plan, read the [Executive Summary](#).

My wife hosted a dinner party for all our friends, some of whom we hadn't seen for ages and everyone was encouraged to bring their children along as well

All throughout dinner my wife's best friend's four-year-old daughter stared at me as I sat opposite her.

The girl could hardly eat her food for staring.

I checked my shirt for spots, felt my face for food, and patted my hair in place, but nothing stopped her from staring at me.

Finally I asked her, "Why are you staring at me?"

Everyone at the table had noticed her behavior, and the table went quiet, waiting for her response.

The little girl said, "I'm just waiting to see how you drink like a fish."



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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

2016-2017

January 19-22,	SHOT Show, Las Vegas
January 20-23	WSF Convention Reno, Peppermill
January 21-24	ISE Show - Sacramento
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 1Q2016 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
August 22	Due date for articles for 3Q2016 CAWSF Newsletter
May 20	Due date for articles for 2Q2016 CAWSF Newsletter
October TBD	DBH Hunter Orientation in Sacramento (8-12:00)
November TBD	Sheep Summit XX in Ontario
November 20	Due date for articles for 4Q2016 CAWSF Newsletter

President's Letter

Dear CA Wild Sheep Members and Friends,

I was recently invited to participate as a panelist at a symposium on the law, policies, economics and environmental impacts of hunting. At first, I was skeptical of participating. The event seemed to pose a recipe for disaster.

The triggering event (excuse the pun) was the uproar over the infamous "Cecil the Lion" incident. The organizer was a third-year law student who admitted she was an animal sympathizer with no exposure to hunting. The venue was a law school in San Francisco. My initial reaction was to picture unruly animal rights, anti-hunting protesters shouting down any meaningful discussion and creating negative publicity.



However, after seeing the lineup of other participants and being assured this was going to be a controlled, rational discussion, I agreed to participate. I am glad I did. The animal rights side was represented by leaders of organizations such as the Humane Society of the United States, the Animal Legal Defense Fund, the International Fund for Animal Welfare, and the Center for Biological Diversity.

Other representatives of the conservation/hunting community included Safari Club International's senior litigation attorney from Washington D.C., a couple of wildlife management and biology professors (one from Canada), a woman bow hunting TV personality, and a representative of the Canadian Fur Institute. I participated in a three-person panel (with two animal rights advocates) discussing the role of hunting in the conservation of sustainable biological resources.

Members of the hunting fraternity, including CA Wild Sheep Board Member Bob Keagy and our part-time administrator, Bev Valdez, were willing to enter the lion's den (again excuse the pun) to lend support. There were approximately 100 participants, no protesters, and the discussions were civil and respectful. I came away with several observations.

I was pleased that the event organizer, who probably started out not even knowing wild sheep existed, found me through an internet search and our website. I was gratified that our website obviously attracts people who are non-members and not necessarily sheep enthusiasts who are interested in hunting and conservation. And I was encouraged that even in liberal San Francisco, at a law school with a lot of younger people, relatively shortly after a high publicity event that was cast to put hunting in a negative light, there was not a lot of anti-hunters flocking to an event to promote the anti-hunting agenda.

Most importantly, I came away very impressed and confident of how the "hunting as conservation" message compares to the animal rights' positions when presented in a rational, face-to-face discussion. I have of course read and heard much about the role of hunting in conservation and have heard and seen the animal rights propaganda and publicity. But this is the first time I heard or participated in a give-and-take, head-to-head rational discussion of the issues.

As a trial attorney, I long ago learned how important it is not to unquestioningly believe in my own case, but to listen to the opposing side carefully and objectively, anticipate what their arguments are going to be, and try to assess how a juror with no background or knowledge of the case will react. I came away from the symposium honestly believing that the great majority of people with no preconceived positions on animal rights or hunting, who are exposed to both sides, will come to the conclusion that hunting as conservation is vastly more logical and supported by facts and science than the positions of the animal rights advocates.

As the hunting season winds down, I hope that all of you were able to spend the maximum time possible in the field and enjoyed those experiences that make hunting so special—and maybe were even fortunate enough to harvest an animal. I look forward to seeing all of you at the annual dinner on April 30, 2016 in Rancho Cordova. Rest assured the CA Wild Sheep Board is already working hard and enthusiastically to provide a great event you will not want to miss.

Happy Holidays and Good Hunting!!

Paul Brisso, President

WEEKEND ON THE STEWART RANCH WITH ARROW FIVE OUTFITTERS

by Ken Crother

This past April my family and I had the opportunity to attend the CA WSF banquet and fundraiser in Rancho Cordova, California. What a great event! The dinner was fantastic, the raffle and silent auction items as well were amazing, and most of all the live auction was put together very well with a long list of great opportunities in North America and around the world. As is typically the thought when attending these events with a budget, I had no intention on purchasing any auction items but planned on getting in on a great raffle hunt for Dall Sheep as well as get my tickets into the regular raffle items. As the evening progressed I kept reading over the auction list and couldn't keep from turning the page back to a great Columbian blacktail deer hunt for one of my kids with Arrow Five Outfitters in the northwest part of California. About an hour later after (a couple of elbows to my ribs from my wife), my boy Caleb and I had a hunt for the fall lined up with Arrow Five.

In November, Caleb and I headed north through Garberville to one of the ranches that Arrow Five hunts on. What a perfect trip for us — it is close and makes for a short hunt as it is tough for him to get out of high school for a full week to go out of state hunting. We pulled in late and met TinaMarie Schaafsma at the lodge and got settled in. We arrived in the dark but what a great next morning it was to wake and see this property. It was beautiful, with oak studded rolling hills and carpeted with grass as well as granite rock outcroppings and settled next to the Eel river. The 11,000 acres allows for plenty of room for multiple hunters at a time and oh, did I mention the deer yet? This ranch has been managed well and the trip up there was worth it just to get to travel the ranch and look at numerous trophy bucks as well as other game. We also had the opportunity to see a bobcat and bear so for Caleb that was a treat as well.

The hunt Caleb was on was a generous 100% donation from Jim and TinaMarie for a youth or first time hunter for a management buck at the Stewart Ranch. Sounds easy, but to be honest there were so many trophy bucks on the property, good problem for most hunters, that we really had to look at quite a few animals to find a good mature buck that just wouldn't become a trophy over time. We had the opportunity to spend our time in the field with Guy and Jeffrey and our fearless guide dog "Hunter". He was there to assist Caleb in tracking if he didn't make a perfect shot. The first day we spent looking over lots of deer and retired to the lodge for a great lunch in the afternoon and dinner in the evening.



The hospitality was great and we enjoyed sharing stories with the group and a couple of other hunters that were in camp. Caleb enjoyed playing pool and staring at all of the great trophy mounts that line the walls of every building. The second morning we spent glassing and counting antler tips and, lo and behold, while looking at a forked horn Guy said "I just saw the tree move behind the brush but there was no wind." We were off, there was a great 2 x 3 that gave us the slip with his doe and we made a plan to come back in the afternoon and find him again. After lunch on our way to that end of the ranch, we ran into another great buck and never made it to the first one. Guy, Cody, Caleb and I took off and after a couple of different location moves and some fun stalking, Caleb made a great shot and had his first blacktail buck. He was very excited and we were all impressed with his ability to make a quick decision and shot on this old forked horn.

Rain came that evening and we had a great dinner and got organized for our trip home the next day. Morning allowed us to spend some time with Jim on the ranch just enjoying looking at the deer. What a gentleman and it was very interesting to hear the stories he has as well as history on the ranch and how it has been managed over the years. With the rain the animals were moving and it was nice to get to just glass and talk with Jim. Both TinaMarie and Jim could not have been nicer folks and great hosts as well. I cannot thank them enough for this very generous and great donation to our chapter. Guy, who hunted with us and Deb, who cooked in camp, Jeffrey, and Cody all made this a memorable trip as well. They are headed for Mexico soon for muleys and coues deer for a month or so and would I love to make that trip as well someday.

Thank you CA WSF for a great dinner and opportunity to get my family out in the field through your fundraiser. Thank you Jim and TinaMarie for your generosity, I hope we meet again.

CALIFORNIA BIGHORN HUNT

by Bob Keagy

Like many of us, I grew up on a steady diet of Hemingway, Corbett and Jack O'Connor. The writings of O'Connor were always somewhere around my room. These writings were the basis for a goodly number of hunts around the world over the next 50 years or so. Eventually, I amassed a collection including ten or eleven wild sheep, and so I knew how challenging and, thereby, rewarding, a sheep can be.

Nevertheless, I felt that until I finished my North American Grand Slam, I really wouldn't have a "complete" (Hah!) collection. I needed both a bighorn and a desert, but somehow the bighorn seemed probably the more difficult of the two, and therefore should be tackled first. I considered booking a bighorn hunt several times--each time my advancing age made me hesitate --"62 and hunting sheep??" No way! "65 and hunting sheep/" No way! "68 and hunting sheep?" It was, as the French say, "to laugh". Eventually, though, at age 69, I figured that it was pretty much "now or never", and, not to add too many cliches: "nothing ventured, nothing gained".

I had been active in SCI for over 30 years, and so I knew the names of several highly regarded sheep guides. I tentatively decided upon Darrell Schneider of Ashnola Guide Outfitters of Southern British Columbia. I spoke with several friends such as Ed Yates and Renee Snider, and got glowing reports, confirming my generally very favorable impressions. I met with Darrell at the 2012 convention and booked in for early 2015.

For the next two years or so, I hiked nearly every day at least two miles, and rode a stationary bicycle into bicycle oblivion. Perhaps more importantly, I also lost 60+ pounds. I acquired a fancy new super-lightweight rifle in an exotic caliber, and found it was inaccurate after the first shot, reverted to my faithful .270 WSM Kimber (won in a WSF raffle), fiddled with boots, and finally stuck with my proven Meindl's, bothered friends ad nauseum with patently self-evident questions and generally worried myself into a stew. My bum left knee received an injection of cortisone from a needle that looked like it was intended for injecting elephants. The preparations were endless, but, I felt warranted, as the bighorn hunt was pretty costly.

In mid-August of 2015 my wife, Pam, and I flew north, overnighting at Calgary, then continuing on the next morning to Penticton, Southern British Columbia. In these days when everyone has horror stories regarding documentation, and importing guns across borders, I must note that the Canadian Customs folks were exceedingly friendly, helpful and unwaveringly cheerful. We got picked up the next day

at Penticton by a ram-rod thin Darrell, and piled our minor mountain of camera and gun cases, luggage, etc. into his truck and departed for his lodge, just outside Hedly, British Columbia.

Darrell has two hunts, a "high" hunt involving an all-day horseback ride into a high country tented camp, and a "low" hunt from the lodge itself, which I was to be on. I was assured repeatedly that the rams were just as numerous on the lower hunt as the upper, but I was a bit concerned (I LIKE riding horses and Pam was a state bare-back champion). Also hunting with us at this time was Mark Donovan, from Tucson, Arizona, a fine gentleman who would be taking the "high" hunt.

A consistent problem with the early stages of this adventure was smoke from surrounding forest fires, both in Washington state and on both sides in British Columbia, which often limited glassing to five or six hundred yards at most.

We met our personal guide Jason Buehler, and settled into the lodge. Jason had been out on the many logging and cattle roads in the area in a 4-wheel ATV, and had glassed a bachelor herd of seven to eight rams in a high v-shaped meadow. In Darrell's huge area, he has around 600 sheep, and some very attractive rams. Jason had sighted a broomed 7/8ths curl ram in a bachelor group which he felt might "make book", and went out to glass them, both morning and evening. The rams appeared to be content in their high meadow stronghold.

Opening morning of sheep season began at 2 a.m., with a nice breakfast, which I couldn't force myself to eat. We got in the truck, and drove about 12 miles to a road head, rolled the ATV off the truck, and drove another seven miles on an abandoned logging road, circumventing various road obstacles.





By 3:30 a.m. we were hiking across a logged flat with flashlights, then descending into a monstrous dead fall area, looking for a path that skirted the edge of the mountain. We missed it, and went down several hundred yards through thick deadfalls. Jason called a halt, and went looking for the path, which was found, naturally enough, above us. We then side-hilled and followed the cattle path for about two miles, glassing wherever there was a good view above the timber. We saw nothing but a whitetail doe, running frantically downhill. By 7 a.m. we were above the ram's meadow, glassing carefully in the slanting morning light.

Nothing.

We chose a good outlook, concealed in the edge of the aspens, and waited for the rams to put in their regular appearance. Time passed. A whitetail buck bounded past us as if the devil himself was on his heels. More time passed. We ate lunch. By four o'clock it was obvious that the rams had, for some reason, moved. The two deer bounding down the hill led us to suspect that a mountain lion was prowling the area, as Darrell has a high population of cougars in his concession.

It took us roughly two hours to get back to the ATV, and another two hours to get back to the lodge at seven p.m. I was pretty beat, as seventeen hours days are a bit trying.

The next day, Pam and I stayed in the lodge, while Jason went and did his glassing. A young fellow who worked for Darrell also went to other areas of the concession to glass. Nothing..

The third day, I went out with my trusty .270 (Jack O'Connor: please note: 270!), and we rattled down perilous roads, rode ATV's on 30 degree slopes, and covered a lot of ground.

About 2 p.m. we were glassing a rugged hill face, some distance below the meadow, when Jason said "I've got a ram". I got it in my binoculars, and saw a 3/4's curl ram at 750 yards, standing looking pensively

out into the valley below. We crossed the road and ran 200 yards into the trees, trying to close the distance. We were having a problem in that now we were in the timber, and had to find a clear path to get a better look at the ram. We found a knob, with a fairly steep 35-40 degree upwards angle to the ledge where we had seen the ram. There was a really ideal boulder on the knob, though, with a reasonably clear view of the ledge, and I got down into firing position. We waited until sundown, but the ram did not show himself again that afternoon.

The fourth day we again intensively glassed the mountain facing for the rams, but only saw a very small half-curl ram, which was of only passing interest. Jason felt that we had been seeing smaller members of the same bachelor herd, but it was clear that the bigger rams had left the mountain side.

About four p.m. Jason and I agreed that if the bigger members of the bachelor group were not around, they had probably left the mountain facing, and returned up a wide draw to their high mountain meadow. We packed up our gear and scopes and drove back to a turn-out from which we could unload the ATV and proceed up an abandoned logging road to check the area. Our first glassing produced nothing.

We moved to a higher promontory, and after only a few seconds, Jason said "There they are". The rams were bunched together, walking slowly across a wide grassy shelf, towards a high country cattle trough. Just a bunch of the boys ambling along for an evening drink. Jason and I got on the ATV, and drove the 1800 yards to the back of a small ridge above the sheep.

We parked 500 yards below the crest, and Jason told me to be very silent, avoid stepping on dried foliage, and keep close. We soon crested the ridge and dropped down to a beautifully convenient rock overlooking the grassy shelf, and got ready. The rams didn't oblige, and after a few minutes we echeloned back over the ridge and dropped down to another well-placed boulder. Again, the rams milled around just below my firing line and just over the edge of the bench that we were on. Jason and I got up and went to a third position, but we did not see the rams. Jason got up and walked slowly towards the edge, looking to his front, fearing that the rams had managed to disappear into the thick timber below the bench.

I followed Jason, and chanced to look below and behind us. There, looking pretty worried, was the group of rams--we had gotten in front of them!! I "hissed" to Jason, he instantly realized that we had gotten in front of the rams, and I moved quickly to get behind him. I asked if the ram on the right, obviously a fine ram, was the biggest and he said "yes". I then asked Jason to put his finger in his left ear, and lean over and not move. I put the rifle fore-end over Jason's shoulder. He was stock-still. In the failing light, the rams were beginning to walk with that stiff-jointed

semi-trot before they really get into high gear, but I was able to get the glowing illuminated crosshairs on the dark shoulder of the biggest ram. The crosshairs danced a bit, but I was “seeing fur” through the scope and I knew I’d have a good shot, so I squeezed the trigger. The ram went about four steps and collapsed. Jason yelled to “hit him again” which I did, although it subsequently proved unnecessary.

The ram had been hit the first time with a fortuitously dead-on 130 yard shoulder shot, and the second shot, fired when the ram was down, hit high on the right hip and exited low on the left brisket, traversing the entire body cavity. Either shot would have been instantly fatal, and I doubt that the ram ever knew what hit it.

The ram was a 7/8th’s curl, eight year old ram, with great mass, and I was in seventh heaven,

even as a cold drizzle began to fall. Using flashlights, we caped and quartered the ram, saving also the tongue and liver, loaded all of this, plus our gear, on our faithful four wheeler, and were home by eleven o’clock, to a very strong Jack Daniels, a hot shower, and a welcome bed.

Obviously, I have nothing but praise for Ashnola Guide Outfitters, Guide Jason Buehler, and, suitably emboldened and encouraged, I’m now looking forward to an upcoming desert sheep hunt.

CALIFORNIA WILD SHEEP SUMMIT XVIII

November 20, 2015 Ontario, CA

By Mike J. Borel

CA WSF and SCBS hosted Sheep Summit XVIII (yes #18!) on November 20. This has proven to be a valuable interactive seminar and a Summit XIX is scheduled for April 29, 2016 – the day before our annual fundraiser in Rancho Cordova. The purpose of these summits is “through sharing and collaboration to accomplish more collectively for the Desert Bighorn in CA than the sum of what each organization can accomplish individually.” Following is a brief summary of Session XVIII.

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS: CDFW, MNP, CAWSE, SCBS

New information reviewed:

1. DBH Disease Monitoring Update and Actions [Dekalaita]
2. Comprehensive Overarching Bighorn Sheep Plan - Status and Overview of Key Recommendations; Herd Unit Management Plans - Status and Overview of Key Recommendations [Abella]
3. Status and Results from Aerial and Ground Surveys; Populations and Range Analysis [Abella]
4. Desert Bighorn Sheep Activities in Region 6 [Few]
5. Update on Sierra Nevada Bighorns [Few]
6. Report on Recent Activities in WAFWA, Wild Sheep & Goat Council, Desert Bighorn Council, Boone & Crockett Club, etc. that are of value and interest for CA wild sheep [Bleich]

7. Big Game Advisory Committee - Project Grants funded, status, learnings [Abella]
8. State Lands status and progress [Bleich]
9. Update on activities of interest in southern California. [Villepique]
10. How can we make it easier and faster to do drinker system replacements? [All]

Our previously committed COLLECTIVE VISION FOR WILD SHEEP IN CALIFORNIA:

- Ensure the persistence and restoration of healthy and sustainable metapopulations of bighorn sheep throughout their historical distribution in California.
- Develop and use science as the basis for conservation and management.
- Provide for recreational uses of bighorn sheep wherever appropriate.

GRETA'S ONCE IN A LIFETIME HUNT

by George Houston



Greta Horn was lucky enough to draw one of Oregon's coveted bighorn sheep tags for the west side of the John Day River canyon. Those of us fortunate enough to accompany Greta on this once in a lifetime hunt included Greta's husband Casey, Jerry Rooney, Sr., Jerry Rooney, Jr., myself and our son Jack. From daylight until dark for the last four days, Greta was either glassing for sheep or scurrying over sheep country. She gave this hunt a 110% effort, and it paid off.

On day four, the temperature dropped and the wind started blowing from 15 to 20 miles per hour with gusts up to 40 miles per hour; a miserable day. It was on this same day that we found the ram we were after. As Casey, Jerry, Sr., and Jack glassed from above, Greta, Jerry, Jr., and I went after the ram descending and side hilling down into a deep canyon. Our ram was accompanied by three lesser rams and four ewes so we had plenty of eyes to contend with.

Before we could get into position, the sheep fed to the bottom of the canyon and started up the other side. Staying in a boulder strewn gulch hidden from view, we worked our way as fast as we could down the steep mountain. Near the bottom, we side hilled to a small finger ridge and crawled the last fifty yards until the sheep came into view. Greta got behind the rifle, but it was in vain as the shot would be 506 yards and the wind was howling.

Greta kept calm (for the most part) and tried to keep the big ram in the center of her scope as we waited for a break in the wind. After about fifteen minutes of Greta staying in position to shoot, the wind finally subsided, but the big ram was holding his head over the back of one of the ewes so Greta couldn't shoot. About the time our ram left this ewe, the wind was slicing down through the canyon. It never failed: every time the ram was by himself, the

wind was howling. Every time the wind calmed down for a shot, the eight sheep were in a tight bunch eliminating a shot opportunity.

This game continued for almost an hour, and Greta never left the rifle or the scope. She stayed ready to shoot the whole time and had to be getting cold and fatigued as Jerry and I continued to tell her the position of the big ram and to either hold or to get ready to shoot.

After close to an hour, the big ram momentarily stepped from the group as the wind started to subside. I told Greta to get ready to fire, and then to take the shot. Just as she practiced this year, Greta took a breath, exhaled and then softly squeezed the trigger. At the shot, the group of sheep sprinted to the right and then up the steep mountain, but our ram ran down the hill and stopped in the rim rock. When he just stood there, Jerry and I both knew the ram had to be hit, but we didn't know where. As Greta got into position for a second shot, Jerry yelled out, "your ram just fell over!" Greta had made one perfectly placed shot at 506 yards on her once in a lifetime ram. There was a lot of hollering, hugs and high fives, and Casey, Jerry, Sr., and Jack were frozen to the bone as they watched the whole thing unfold from above.

The whole crew descended to the bottom of the canyon. The next highlight was watching 72 year young Jerry, Sr., climb his way up through vertical rim rock with the rest of us to reach the ram at his resting spot. It was his first time ever on a wild sheep kill, and he wouldn't miss the opportunity for the world.

Greta's ram was a beautiful nine year old ram that scored 164 according to the biologists in the Dalles. Suffice it to say that Greta is one tough cookie, and she absolutely earned this once in a lifetime ram.

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by Bill Gaines

Gaines & Associates Government Relations

A meeting with **Commissioner Anthony Williams** at the California Fish and Game Commission office in Sacramento on 11/12/15 was attended by many conservation groups. Member John Ware and part-time administrator Beverly Valdez attended the meeting. Commissioner Williams was alerted to issues and took some possible actions as the discussion proceeded. The facts about what conservation groups do to support wildlife, in addition to hunting, were positively received. It was a small step but an important one with this new commissioner.

In late November 2015 the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) began a **challenge to DFW's elk management, as well as elk tag quotas**. CBD's concerns were laid out in an August 2015 letter to the DFW, followed by a letter to Fish and Game Commission President Jack Baylis. CBD's concerns over DFW elk management and tag quotas are surely driven by their desire to have less elk taken by hunters in order to make more elk available to wolves. Should CBD be successful in this challenge of the management and hunter take of elk in California, DFW's management of wild sheep and other big game will likely be their next target. *The key to prevailing in this challenge is to convince new Commissioners that DFW elk data is sound, their management justified and their quotas supportable.*

The 2015 Session of the California State Legislature, the first year of the two-year 2015/2016 Session, formally came to a close on 10/11/15.

AB 96 (ATKINS) – Importation or Sale of Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn This bill would prohibit a person from purchasing, selling, offering for sale, importing or possessing with intent to sell ivory or rhinoceros horn. With the solid backing of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and countless animal-welfare organizations, this bill moved quickly – passing all the way through the Assembly by early June.

AB 96 allows for very few exceptions, but would exempt ivory or rhinoceros horn that is part of a musical instrument – including a string or wind instrument or piano – as long as it is less than 20 percent by volume of the instrument and the owner or seller provides historical documentation demonstrating provenance and showing the item was manufactured no later than 1975. The measure also exempts ivory or rhinoceros horn that is part of a bona fide antique, as long as it is less than five percent by volume of the antique, and the antique status is established with historical documentation demonstrating provenance and showing the item to

be more than 100 years old.

This bill **WAS SIGNED** by the Governor. The bill's provisions take effect on July 1, 2016.

BILLS TO WATCH IN 2016

AB 665 (FRAZIER) – Local Regulation of Hunting and Fishing —Grabbing center stage for the conservation community in the upcoming 2016 State Legislative Session is AB 665 by Assembly Member Jim Frazier (D/11- Oakley). This much-needed legislation would provide that the California Fish and Game Commission and DFW are the only entities that may adopt regulations regarding the taking or possession of fish and game on any land or water within the state – in effect, prohibiting cities, counties and other local jurisdictions from passing their own local ordinances that restrict hunting or fishing within their boundary. This legislation would not preclude public or private landowners from prohibiting hunting or fishing on their land.

To meet legislative deadline, AB 665 must be heard in Assembly Appropriations Committee and passed to the Floor by 1/22/16.

AB 499 (COOLEY) – Archery Hunting: Concealed Firearms — Current law prohibits an individual who is archery hunting for deer from carrying a firearm, with the exception of an active or retired peace officer. This bill by Assembly Member Ken Cooley (D/08-Rancho Cordova) would authorize a person with a conceal carry permit to carry a firearm while archery hunting deer, as long as they do not attempt to take deer with the firearm. The measure does not try to address restrictions on conceal carry while hunting other game species because those prohibitions are contained in regulation, not statute in the Fish and Game Code.

A scheduled hearing was canceled at the author's request in order to provide time to build a stronger support net for the legislation.

To meet legislative deadline, AB 499 must be heard in Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee by 4/22/16.

AB 462 (GROVE) – Firearm Waiting Period — Current law requires a 10 day “waiting period” before an individual can obtain a firearm that they have purchased.

AB 462 was scheduled to be heard in Assembly Public Safety Committee on April, but was pulled from the agenda by the author and became a “two-

year” bill.

To remain viable, AB 462 must be heard in Assembly Public Safety Committee by 1/15/16.

AB 395 (GALLAGHER) – Repeal of Non-Lead Ammunition for Hunting

This straightforward legislation by Assembly Member James Gallagher (R/03- Yuba City) would

repeal the requirement placed into law by the passage of AB 711 that non-lead ammunition be used for all hunting statewide. Knowing that the bill, as currently written, would fail passage if heard in Committee, the author made AB 395 a “two-year” bill.

AB 395 will have to be heard in Assembly Policy Committee by 1/15/16.

FNAWS RAM

by Kyle Meintzer

Early Wednesday AM September 9, 2015 I took my **Fourth North American Wild Sheep**. This one was a California bighorn sheep I took in the Okanagan in BC with the Nosler 6.5 x 284 Norma I won at the 2009 CA WSF banquet raffle.

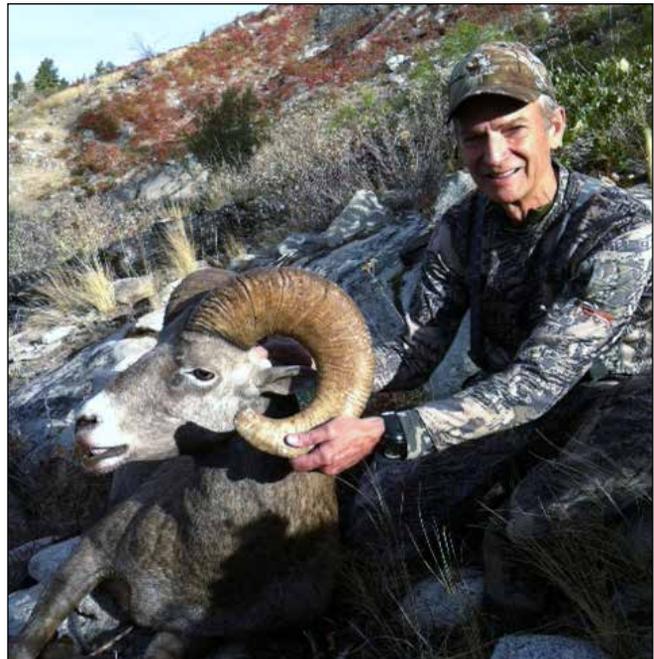
As opposed to all the other bighorn hunts I’ve done, this one was a ridiculously non-physical hunt we (my non-hunting neighbor came along) could ever have imagined.

We stayed at the Spirit Ridge resort (a luxury wine country resort) in Osoyoos as you can see from these photos.

We left Reno mid-morning on 9/6 and were back home before suppertime on 9/10, even after swinging through Anderson, CA to drop off my ram at Eric Gould’s Artistic Wildlife taxidermy shop in Anderson, CA.

I chose Eric because he had been generous enough to donate a pedestal mount to our banquet earlier this year, (which I bought).

Truly a CA WSF Ram!



ROADS, ROUTES, AND RAMS:

DOES SEXUAL SEGREGATION CONTRIBUTE TO ANTHROPOGENIC RISK IN A DESERT-DWELLING UNGULATE

by *Vernon C. Bleich, PhD*



In November, I presented information at the Science Symposium held by the California Fish and Wildlife Department in Davis, California. Based on research by J.C. Whiting R.T. Bowyer, J.G. Kie, and myself, the presentation focused on sexual segregation of ungulates (sheep) based on man-made structures such as roads. Below is a short synopsis of the presentation. Anyone interested in more detail is encouraged to email me.

Roads are ubiquitous in most landscapes throughout the world; they are a major cause of wildlife mortality, as well as habitat loss and fragmentation. Nevertheless, little is known about the consequences of roads and their implications for the conservation of large mammals relative to sexual segregation defined as the spatial separation of the sexes outside of the mating season. In this study we use bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) as a model organism to test for effects of sexual segregation on movements by artiodactyls that exhibit extreme sexual dimorphism; we examine whether sexual segregation contributed to greater risks taken by one sex or the other relative to anthropogenic barriers in the form of paved or non-maintained roads. We hypothesized that both types of roads would influence movements, and predicted that adult males would cross such barriers more often than females during movements from areas where males segregated from females to those ranges occupied by females, and where mating occurred. We postulated that those roads would be more of an impediment to movements for females than for males because of the tendency of females and you to avoid open, more-level terrain associated with a greater risk of predation, areas where roads are most apt to occur. Both types of roads affected movements of females compared with movements of males. More males than females were likely to cross either paved

or dirt roads during segregation, and dirt roads during aggregation. Our results indicate that roads affect male and female bighorn sheep differently as the result of sexual segregation. Thus, biologists should consider sexual segregation when assessing potential anthropogenic efforts on movements and how roads, even lightly traveled ones, affect movements of male and female ungulates prior to manipulating habitat or translocating animals to reestablish populations in historically occupied, but currently vacant, areas.



*Wildlife Overpasses in Croatia – Why can't we do this?
Thanks to Jeff Villepique for sharing.*

COUNTING SHEEP : AIRLIFTING BIGHORN SHEEP BACK INTO THE SIERRA NEVADA'S NATIONAL PARKS

by Laura Allen: November 16th 2015

[Editor's note: This project was partially funded by California Wild Sheep Foundation thanks to the support of our members.]

This March, a large helicopter thrummed over the 13,000-foot-high pinnacles of Yosemite National Park's Cathedral Range with an aluminum box dangling from a long cable. Inside the box were sheep—four Sierra Nevada bighorns waiting (patiently, in fact) to touch down in their new home, a rocky slope nubbled with glacial scree and lodgepole pines. "That's the scariest part for me," said California Department of Fish and Wildlife biologist Tom Stephenson, whose eyes were locked on the transport helicopter from a second helicopter. "Watching that box hang, and making sure it gets there safely."

Biologists and the conservation community have been working for decades to restore populations of this endangered paragon of the Sierra Nevada's rugged wilderness. Translocations—the transfer of rams and ewes from healthy herds to vacant habitat—have been their chief strategy to reestablish herds that once prospered along the Sierra crest. The March Yosemite drop, and another a few days later in Sequoia National Park, were the most complex translocations conducted in the Sierras so far. They are also close to the last—the sheep, scientists predict, can mostly take it from here. Stephenson, who leads the recovery effort, said that the new managed herds are thriving. Within five years their numbers should support downlisting from endangered to threatened. Permanent delisting should follow.

"Over the decades, I've heard some pessimists say that we'll never delist Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep," said Kevin Hurley, conservation director of the Wild Sheep Foundation. "Well, we're getting closer all the time."

Historically, bighorn sheep were common in alpine areas from British Columbia to northern Mexico. There are three subspecies: Rocky Mountain bighorns along the Continental Divide, desert bighorns of the arid Southwest, and the most isolated subspecies, the Sierra Nevada bighorns. Two hundred years ago, as many as two million bighorn sheep lived in North America. But exploitation during westward expansion, as well as the installment of domestic sheep, which can host pathogens fatal to wild sheep, drastically reduced these numbers. By the 1950s, bighorn populations were patchy and thin—only 25,000 sheep remained.

Sierra Nevada bighorns were always the most vulnerable because they are the most geographically isolated subspecies with the smallest population. Genetically distinct from the other types, these sheep, with their unique wide-flaring horns, evolved to thrive in the Sierras' contiguous high-elevation crest, primarily on the drier eastern slopes. About 1,000 bighorn sheep occupied this mountain range before European settlement. By 1995, scientists could find only 100 Sierra Nevada bighorns in the whole range.

Thanks to a sustained conservation effort among state and federal agencies, hunters, tribal commissions, and other entities, bighorn populations across North America have more than tripled from their 1950s low. That's largely a result of the relocation of 21,000 sheep since 1922. While the practice didn't really pick up until the 1940s and '50s, on average, that's nearly 20 airlifted sheep a month, said Hurley.

The recovery story for Sierra Nevada sheep is even more remarkable, with populations rebounding to six times their 1995 numbers. The range's national parks—Yosemite, Kings Canyon, and Sequoia—have been critical to this success because of their nearly intact habitat. But although sheep translocations have been occurring in the Sierras since the 1980s, the targeted sites have straddled only the parks' eastern fringes.

This year's operations delivered sheep deep within the interiors of Sequoia and Yosemite. The Cathedral Range site was not even considered an option at first; biologists thought it too high, too snowy, and too forested for a herd to survive there year-round. Wildlife managers began taking it seriously after they analyzed data from sheep GPS collars and realized they were underestimating where these hardy climbers could thrive. Even more significant, evidence showed that sheep had been in the Cathedral Range previously. In 1933, the wizened body of a ram, by then a few hundred years old, thawed out of glacier ice in the region. And last fall, when Yosemite wildlife biologist Sarah Stock and her family were backpacking in the Cathedral Range, she discovered an old ram skull. "We started to understand that there's more of a diversity of habitats that the sheep could use," said Stephenson.

In September 2012, Stephenson, Stock, and colleagues hiked to the Cathedral Range's high cliffs to evaluate it as a possible release site. They saw very few deer tracks, which was good news—mountain lions would be less likely to hunt there. The buckwheat and grasses on the cliffs were also a reassuring sight—that

meant the sheep were likely to stay healthy through the winter. Most important, it was far from domestic sheep operations, unlike the eastern edge of the park. “When Cathedral seemed to check out on all those fronts, we just got giddy,” Stock said. Stephenson felt they couldn’t meet the delisting goals without it.

Getting the sheep to the two isolated park sites, though, required a web of logistics. For each translocation, biologists had to choose source herds with sufficient genetic diversity, then set up base camps near those animals. An operator in a small, nimble helicopter hovered 15 feet above selected sheep, then, like Spider-Man, fired a “net gun” that captured them. After checking their vitals and drawing blood for genetic evaluation—all while the sheep were blindfolded, which made them immediately docile—the team fastened tracking collars and loaded the animals into the aluminum boxes. A truck carted the boxes to a local airport, where the larger helicopter was waiting. After a 15-minute flight over Yosemite’s high, rugged peaks, the operator gently deposited

the three boxes. The biologists opened the doors and watched the sheep bolt for the cliffs. “It was almost like a parent having to let go,” said Stock. “You put so much preparation into it and you just have to trust: OK they got this.”

All signs say that they do. Nearly all of the translocated ewes were pregnant, and biologists are expecting to find a bunch of lambs at the new park sites when they complete their latest survey. “We need at least 305 adult and yearling females to be able to downlist and we are up to 275 females now,” Stephenson said. “I have very high hopes.”



2015 THE CHINESE YEAR OF THE SHEEP... THE GREEN SHEEP

Chinese New Year is the first day of the lunar year, based upon the calendar used in pre-modern China. In modern China, the western calendar is the official calendar, but the traditional lunar calendar still determines the dates of many traditional holidays. According to the lunar calendar, the first day of the first month of the year is also the first day of Spring. The first day of the Chinese New Year is February 19, which begins the Year of the Ram, and you will also see it referred as the Year of the Goat, or the Year of the Sheep. In Chinese we use the same general term yáng for these animals. This is the Year of the Green or Wooden Sheep to be more precise. So what does it mean? Each of the twelve animals in the Chinese Zodiac has unique characteristics and each year corresponds to one animal. 2015 corresponds to the Sheep. In addition to the twelve year cycle corresponding to each of the animals in the Chinese Zodiac, there are Five Elements (wood, fire, earth, metal, water) which are associated with their own “life force” or “chi”. This energy blends with the corresponding animal to determine that year’s fortune.

In 2015, the corresponding element is Wood. Wood by its very nature, is the element associated with all living things, the “spring” or life renewal process. Wood relates to trees which relate to the color green. The Year of the Wood Sheep (or Goat) is therefore also known as the Year of the Green Sheep. What does Wood and Sheep mixed together bring? The Year of the Sheep follows a tumultuous Year of the Horse, and heralds a more calm atmosphere. Combined with the evergreen and renewal characteristics of Wood, the Sheep’s creativity will be unleashed. A year of renewal and creativity. The next Year of the Green Sheep will be in another 60 years (chinafamilyadventure.com)

SUPPORTING OUR SISTER ORGANIZATION, SCBS, WITH A DRINKER INSTALLATION

by Mike Borel, afflictee of Sheep Fever

Don Priest, George Kerr and I had the pleasure of joining our comrades in SCBS (Society for Conservation of Bighorn Sheep) for a 2 tank new installation on 29 Palms Marine Base. What a terrific experience! A wonderful site had been selected by Glen Sudmeier that enables a stair step connection to other sheep. They were incredibly well organized and managed to get the tanks, tools and rain mat in on Friday. We showed up Friday afternoon just as they were getting back to the designated camping area. Terry, who volunteered to cook, did so very well. We had dinner, enjoyed a campfire and turned in. At 7AM, the Marine base personnel arrived to give us the necessary briefings – desert safety, unexploded ordinance, etc. It was professional and good advice. We took off on rough two track for 1 ½ hours to the site. From there it was breaker bars, picks, shovels and wheelbarrows. We had 30 persons in total and needed every one. 50 would have been better. Glen Sudmeier, Steve Marschke and John Roy led the efforts

effectively and certainly did more than their share of the labor. By the time it was almost dark on Saturday, we had the tanks in place and the rain mat in place. We needed another day to plumb the water from the rain mats to the tanks, cover the tanks and finish weighting down the rain mat.

By mid afternoon Sunday, all we needed was ¼ inch of rain to get the tanks started! I very much enjoyed the people I met, the camp food was terrific and it felt great to make a positive difference for Desert Bighorn Sheep in our home state of California.

I'll go again and hope you will too. There will be a project virtually every month until summer when it is simply too hot to do this work.

P.S. Special Thanks to George Kerr, fellow CA WSF Board member and long time SCBS leader for getting me to and from the project and supplying the BEST CAMP GEAR I HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED!



2016 CAFNAWS BANQUET AND FUNDRAISER

by Ken Crother, Fundraiser Chair

For most of you reading this newsletter and the great stories and information regarding our coveted California desert bighorn sheep, you are members of this great conservation organization already. Some of you may pick this up and read it at a friend's house or an office you are visiting. Regardless of your position as a member or nonmember, hunter or non-hunter this organization is focused on the conservation of bighorn sheep in California primarily but also across the west and into Canada and Alaska as well. We often spend great amounts of money on various projects, research, relocations, water hauling and more, but we cannot do it without fundraising and asking for your donations. One of our best ways of raising money is our annual fundraiser, where every year we intend to entertain you with an absolute fantastic night of dinner, raffles, auctions and last year as well as this year the "PUT ONE BACK CASINO."

April 30, 2016 is the date you need to please set aside on your calendar first as this is the big day of our fundraiser in Rancho Cordova, Ca. The second date for those of you that have supported us in the past is March 1, 2016 as this is the date all of us as members and believers in conservation need to start thinking of inviting friends, co workers, hunting buddies, other conservationists and the like. We need to grow this event by no less than 50 more people this year and book our event full so that we can continue to put and

keep sheep on the mountains in California.

We plan on having a great raffle — we are already working on very high end guns, optics, and all kinds of gear for both men and women hunters and non-hunters. Our silent auction is in process as well and trust me we will have something for everyone. We just got news that once again we are going to have the opportunity to raffle another Dall sheep hunt with ULTIMA THULE, what great news and thanks again to Ultima Thule and Don Martin for a great donation. We have also been assigned two great Alaska state tags this year — Copper River Bison and Nunivak Muskox tags will be in our live auction along with numerous new North American hunts, trips and vacations as well.

Please mark your calendars with both dates, one to commit to attending and the second to make a minimum of 5 invitations to those who might enjoy our event as much as you have in the past. I promise that we will work very hard to make your night a memorable one and one that would make you want to return and enjoy the night again with us.

We all look forward to seeing you again in April and thanks in advance for your support of our event. Next article should have some great updates and peeks at some of the items we intend to put in front of you at our event.

ATTENTION – SHEEP HUNTERS AND FUTURE SHEEP HUNTERS IN OR NEAR CALIFORNIA

PLEASE plan to participate in the CA WSF Event April 30 in Rancho Cordova (Sacramento). If each of you can be there it will be an even more fantastic event. Your passion and accomplishments are an inspiration to many who want to meet you, swap stories/experiences and learn from each other.

Sign up by:

1. Using the Website – www.cawsf.org
2. Calling me – Mike Borel at 925-937-4180 (I am always happy to talk sheep!)
3. Completing and Returning the form in this newsletter

RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS #3

by Richard Weaver



When the latest newsletter arrived, it didn't take long before I knew I'd have to respond to Carlos Gallinger's theme of making mountains out of mole hills. Two factors have mainly influenced this, sometimes good and sometimes bad when it

relates to bighorn sheep. For now, we will leave the mining industry for another time.

The over-crossings made for bighorn sheep near Boulder Dam have proven costly but also successful. The secret to this success was getting the ideas out early during the planning stage. At that time, we (the state of California) didn't even know that there were bighorn in the Marble Mountains. When I arrived in the area, I found bighorn signs but had not found any animals or water. I did find a fresh bulldozer trail and many survey stakes. They were re-routing highway 66 with a shorter, full, four-lane freeway.

I was afraid that the new freeway route would cut sheep off from water sources located in the Granite Mountains, so I called my boss in Sacramento and told him my concerns. I also sent him a photo, taken of a dead ram that was hung up in a standard, five-wire highway fence in Arizona. My boss carried my concerns and that photo to the Division of Highways. California was ready to put the job out for bid, but they were also willing to delay the program and consider changes that included woven-wire fence. I believe they didn't want to see pictures, like the one I had sent, on the new fence or in the newspapers. Additional changes included the construction of two water-catchments that used the freeway pavement as an apron and drinkers that were located outside of

the freeway fence. They also put in nine-foot diameter culverts under the road in two places, which were the largest steel culverts available at the time.

It occurs to me that everything man builds will need repair or replacement at some point. When sheep society members later found the drinkers out of service, there was no agreement as to who would be responsible for repairing and maintaining the system. After much discussion, some shouting and a little cursing, the systems are back in service. The lesson is this: **GET AN AGREEMENT ON RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING THE SYSTEM UP FRONT AND GET IT IN WRITING!** I would like to see someone volunteer to check on these culverts, maybe by putting in a trail camera or possibly by baiting. We don't know for sure what type of bait will work, but we will never know if we don't try.

Another example of new highway construction in bighorn habitat is Interstate 8 in San Diego and Imperial Counties. It was under construction when I began bighorn studies in October of 1968. I feared that the new route would cut right through the bighorn habitat and that they would be forced from the area. I was wrong. During construction, the bighorn went to high ground. The heavy machinery and blasting did not drive them from the area. Today, bighorn still use this same area. The secret is the high bridges, with plenty of available daylight underneath and the separation of the up and down traffic. These two features allow the bighorn to use the areas between the road surfaces as well as the areas under the bridges. We could not have predicted this.

P.S. to Mr. Gallinger. A mound of dirt on the up-wind side of a pool of water, to reduce evaporation losses, is exactly what has been done in pronghorn antelope habitat in the Great Basin for 60 years or longer.

Historical photos of California sheep and petroglyphs taken by Carlos Gallinger



KIMBER MOUNTAIN ASCENT HIGHLIGHTS 2016 RAFFLE

The Kimber Mountain Ascent, a sheep hunter's dream rifle, will once again be one of the marquee items in the 2016 general raffle line up at the CA Wild Sheep annual fundraiser on April 30, 2016 at the Rancho Cordova Marriott.



The light, tough, accurate and hard-hitting high-quality rifle was one of the most popular raffle prizes at the 2015 dinner, garnering a lion's share of the raffle tickets purchased by enthusiastic event participants. As in past years, the 2016 raffle will allow ticket purchasers to direct their chances to specific raffle items.

Weighing in at less than five pounds, the rifle is chambered in .280 Ack. Imp. and topped by a Zeiss Conquest scope. The rifle, scope and rings are dipped in Gore Optifade camouflage.

With a retail value of over \$3,100, CA Wild Sheep is once again able to include the firearm in the 2016 raffle offerings due to the generous support of Kimber, who provides the rifle to the Chapter at a reduced rate. Kimber has not only long been known for quality rifles and handguns (a Kimber Pro Carry handgun also gathered great interest at last year's raffle), but for many years has also provided generous support to the national Wild Sheep Foundation and its chapters.

The CA Wild Sheep raffle concentrates on high-quality firearms, optics and other prizes for those participants (if any!) who have too many firearms and optics. Past years have included top quality outdoor clothing and gear and cutting edge electronic products.

Some of the raffle items are specifically intended to draw the interest and tickets of ladies at the event. Last year a gold Michael Kors designer purse drew much interest and the 2016 raffle mix will include a Cole Hahn purse in leopard design valued at over \$375. A Macy's \$1,000 gift certificate to fund a shopping spree has also been historically a favorite for the women.

Sportman's Warehouse has once again agreed to provide invaluable support with firearms and outdoor products for 2016 the event and Leupold and Stevens optics will again be in the line up, thanks to its continued assistance. The Chapter is also working with other past supporters such as Zeiss and Swarovski to add other quality items.

Check the Chapter website as the April 30, 2016 event approaches for updates on the raffle lineup and come prepared to take home some great raffle prizes.

NEVADA DREAM DESERT RAM

by Ben Gordon



While working in my office this past June, I checked my voice mails and listened to a message from my friend Cary Jellison of G&J Outdoors. The message was that I, or my son Tom, had drawn a Nevada Desert Sheep tag. Since my son and I have the same name, I immediately got on the Hunt Nevada web site to see if it was Sr. or Jr. that was the lucky one. I was very excited to learn that it was my son Tom who had drawn, and at that moment Tom walked in the office door. When I told him of his luck, he was in total disbelief, as he thought he would never draw this coveted tag.

The hunt plans began immediately with a call to Cary to contract him as Tom's guide. Tom was along with me when I hunted Desert Sheep in Nevada during the 1999 season, and had tagged along with me on a 2002 Stone Sheep hunt in British Columbia, but this time I would be tagging along with him while he hunted.

Cary had the first eight days of the season booked for Tom, and had scouted for five days prior to the opening day. The unit we were hunting contained the entire Stillwater Range, and, although the sheep population is very good, the range is not known to produce record book rams. Cary, and his sub-guide Chris Hibler, had located many sheep that included a few mature rams. Tom was well aware that a good ram in this area would have horns around 33 inches long and score in the high 150's to low 160's. We had eight days to hunt with Cary, and if we had no luck with him we would hunt till the season ended on our own or till we found the best ram the unit could offer us.

Opening morning was cold, and after glassing

for many hours, over 50 sheep were located along with some small rams but nothing worth going after. After lunch a large group of sheep was spotted on the very top of the mountain with four rams together in some pinion trees. One ram had very heavy bases and longer horns than the others, and we watched him till dark hoping he would still be there in the morning.

The next day was spent trying to locate the ram from the previous night. Many other sheep were spotted along with some other rams but the big ram could not be found. We planned to split up the next day with Tom and Cary returning to the same spot to glass, Chris going south of camp, and I would glass in between them with the hopes of locating the big ram.

The next day was spent once again looking for the heavy ram with no luck. At noon time we all gathered to discuss what we had seen, and make a plan for the rest of the day. After eating my lunch I continued glassing and found a group of five rams on a small bench in very steep terrain. Cary and Tom felt one ram in the group deserved a better look, so up the mountain they went while Chris and I watched from below. After stalking within 70 yards and taking a hard look at the ram the decision was made to pass as Cary felt we could do better. The ram was a solid high 150's and very good for the unit, but we had seen one bigger and Tom was not ready to punch his tag yet. It was a long hike down the mountain in the dark, and Cary and Tom contemplated their decision to pass on the ram hoping it was the right one.

The fourth day began the same as the third with Cary and Tom glassing an area north of camp while Chris went south of camp and I glassed in between. At noon time we all met to discuss what we had seen. Chris had talked to some hunters on the main road who told him of a 170 ram taken near our camp on the valley floor. It was disturbing that we had not seen this ram, and speculated that the sheep were moving south into the lower hills where they winter. It was decided we would start glassing the more southern areas of the Stillwater Range after lunch.

While glassing an area near camp, Cary spotted some ewes a great distance away. Tom and Cary moved down the road six miles to get a better look where the ewes were and found two rams with them. One of the rams was definitely worth a closer look. Cary called Chris and I to come take a look at the ram before a stalk was made. After arriving and taking a long look, Chris and I both thought the ram was a good one but it appeared to have a short horn on his left side. A stalk was planned for Tom and Cary with Chris moving down the road for a better angle to look into a canyon the sheep were feeding toward while I

stayed put in case the sheep changed direction.

Tom and Cary hiked a steep shale covered canyon that was very noisy and headed toward a rock knoll that offered a close shot inside 200 yards. The big ram was out front feeding and heard the rocks tumbling from Tom and Cary's approach. The ram stepped to the top of the ridge to see what the noise was at the same time Tom was getting to the knoll, and then turned and ran some distance before stopping to look back. This was enough time for Tom to take a good look at him and make a decision to shoot. One shot from the Brown Precision .300 win mag at 276 yards anchored the ram to the hillside. Chris and I made good time hiking up to the ram, and made it to him just as Tom and Cary arrived. WOW is all any of us could say! A tape on the long horn stretched to 39 7/8 inches with 14 3/8 bases! This is why his other horn,

which measured 36 2/8 looked short. Pictures followed and the animal was prepped to get packed off the hill.

The next day in Fallon, NV, the local biologists measured and plugged the horns. The NDOW measurement came to 172 7/8 inches. Cary asked them what the biggest ram was from the Stillwater Range and they all agreed that Tom's ram is the biggest ever to be scored from the range. With two rams over 170 harvested this year from the area it appears the Stillwater Range is on a definite increase for quality B&C Desert rams.

Being a sheep hunter myself for the last 17 years and traveling all over the world in pursuit of wild sheep, it was very gratifying and a thrill to be there when my son harvested his first sheep. And not just any sheep, but a Boone and Crockett Desert ram!

CONSERVATION TEACHING PLAN FOR BIGHORN SHEEP DEVELOPED WITH WSF SUPPORT

Recently the Wild Sheep Foundation asked Bear Trust International (beartrust.org) to develop a STEM conservation lesson about bighorn sheep, using some of the same techniques used to develop their curricula about bears. If you are a teacher, know a teacher, or have children in school grades 7-8, this is a great addition to let your school know about.

Bear Trust's STUDENT SCIENTIST SERIES is a science-based education program that places students in the role of scientist. Using real-world data from timely field studies, students answer research questions that have implications for real wildlife conservation.

The study is now ready for download and highlights

- Bear Trust's signature science-based curriculum
- Flipped learning where teachers don't lecture; instead students become the scientists!
- Targets youth in grades 7-8
- Uses real-world data focusing on bighorn sheep
- Encourages peer-to-peer learning
- Meets Next Generation Standards and Common Core State Standards
- Meets STEM guidelines
- and it's free

The Bighorn Sheep STEM lesson includes:

- 1) Introductory slide show, which provides background information and instructions for students and teachers
- 2) Teacher guide and Student Pages
- 3) Part II of the slide show, which includes results, graphs and other answers to questions specifically provided for teachers.

NOTE: Part II of the slide show is passcode protected and available only to teachers. If you are a school teacher or educator at an organization and want the pass code, it's easy to get. Just email Bear Trust: melissa@beartrust.org

After verification of teaching status you'll receive the passcode to download "Part II of the slide show"





SHEEP SUMMIT PRESENTATION

by Regina Abella

Information provided by CA DFW Desert Bighorn Sheep Program Coordinator Regina Abella at the November 2015 Sheep Summit (sponsored and organized by CA WSF) includes some interesting information. Below is an overview of the information presented.

COMPREHENSIVE BIGHORN SHEEP PLAN

Draft over-arching plan will allow for each herd unit to have a *herd unit plan* that includes

- P1: actions that establish consistent, repeatable survey efforts (aerial, ground, camera)
- P2: actions that have the potential to impact herd units
- P3: actions that focus on the herd unit level within the network of the larger metapopulation

Herd Unit Plans

- Herd unit plans will be more specific to the individual herd unit
- Previous plans call for maintaining a minimum 50 ewes and a ram:ewe of 40:100
- Enough adults to sustain a minimum viable population and sufficient short-term genetic variability
- Additionally, lamb:ewe ratio may be added

Herd Unit	Year Approved
Kingston Mountains	1992
Clark Mountain	1991
Clipper Mountains	1992
Orocopia Mountains	1991
Sheephole Mountains	1991
Marble Mountains	1987
Old Dad Peak	1987
White Mountains	2004
Chuckwalla Mountains	1991
Turtle Mountains	1991
Whitewater	1991
Cady Mountains	1992
East Chocolate Mountains	1993
Bristol Mountains	1991
Cady Mountains	2010
South Bristol Mountains	2010

POPULATION INVENTORY

- About 63 herd units to survey
- Beginning with zones with consumptive use, and then what's next? Opportunity to explore new areas
- Interim: Ground surveys

2015 Ground Surveys

	ewes	yrlg ewe	lambs	I	II	III	IV	unclass.	grp total
Mesquite/Kingston	44	10	0	3	3	3	1	6	70
Southern Bristol	30	5	0	0	2	3	2	8	50
San Gorgonio	59	17	5	4	7	14	9	0	115

2015 Aerial Surveys

Location	Lambs	Ewes	yearling Ewes	Rams				Total
				I	II	III	IV	
Clark, Kingston, Mesquite	9	25	1	2	4	4	7	52
Cady	8	31	6	2	2	7	11	67
Old Dad (Peak, Kelso, Petroglyph, Kerr, Club Peak)	11	15	0	0	2	7	2	44
South Bristol	1	7	0	1	1	1	3	15
Clipper	4	20	2	3	1	10	6	47
Orocopia	10	30	1	0	1	2	5	50
Marble Mountains								~70
Sheephole Mountains	4	16	0	0	0	2	3	25

2015 Collared Project Update

	Live Collars to date	Mortalities by Range	2015 Ewes Collared	2015 Rams Collared	2015 Total	2014 Ewes Collared	2014 Rams Collared	2014 Total	2013 Collared Ewes	2013 Collared Rams	2013 Total	2005 Ewes Collared
Black Mountains	2	0				2		2				
Cady Mountains	10	0				10		10				
Clipper Mountains	14	1	8	3	11				4		4	
Granite Mountains	4	1							4	1	5	
Hackberry and Woods Mountain	14	1	7	1	8	1		1	5	1	6	
Marble Mountains	31	4	4	3	7	3	6	9	15		15	4
Newberry Mountains	3	1				4		4				
North Bristol Mountains	18	1	9	4	13			0	6		6	
Old Dad (Peak and Kerr Spur)	20	0	4	3	7				13		13	
Old Dad (Indian and Cane Spring)	6	0							6		6	
Old Woman Mountains	1	0					1	1				
Orocopia Mountains	9	1				10		10				
Piute and Castle Mountains	0	0										
South Bristol Mountains	24	6	4	3	7	3	4	7	13		13	3
Southern Soda Mountains	8	0	4		4			0	4		4	
Totals	164	16	43	17	57	33	11	44	70	2	72	7

Note: 4 outstanding mortalities; Old Dad collars 7, 4 perished during disease event

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



**Erich Thompson (son of Dick Thompson)
Rocky Mountain bighorn; Oregon – Hart Mountains
October 2015**



**Cole Casagrande and dad Adam
with Cole's first turkey
September 2015**



**Henry McNatt
Kuban Tur – 34"
15 years old**

**These two complete Henry's
Ovis™ World Slam®!**



**Henry McNatt
Mid-Caucasian – 28"
11 years old, shot at 515 yards**



**Kevin White – wildlife biologist for State of Alaska and nephew of Board member Roger McCosker;
two of six mountain goats captured and tagged in Haines AK, August 2015**



PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



**Ken and Caleb Crother with Caleb's first blacktail
November 2015**



**Poached ram San Bernadinos – Fall 2015
This makes us ALL Sick**



Newberry Mtn sheep – 2 photos taken early November 2015; photo by Carlos Gallinger



San Gabriel ram killed on road – 2015



**Stan Atwood
Dagestan Tur; Azerbaijan**

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Soda Mtn sheep – 5 photos taken summer 2015; photos by Carlos Gallinger



Tom and Ben Gordon
Tom took this desert ram in the Stillwater Range of central Nevada; unofficial score is 172 7/8; November 2015



Bob Keagy
7/8th curl Bighorn ram, 8 years old, September 2015



Kyle Meintzer
California Bighorn Ram, Completes Kyle's Four North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS)

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Cady Mountains Survey 2015



Clipper Mountains Survey 2015

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Kingston Mountains Survey 2015



Marble Mountains Survey 2015

2016

**Help Put One Back
April 30, 2016**

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29					

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

UNDERSTANDING GAME TRAILS

by Carlos Gallinger, thewayofthings.org

To understand any terrestrial environment one must know how to track and read sign. This skill allows you extend your awareness through time and distance. Part of this skill is understanding game trails, thus allowing you to look back much deeper in time than just tracking.

This knowledge is a powerful asset. It allows you to understand many attributes of the environment that only an in depth knowledge of game trails can provide. One of the first things to understand about game trails is that the most common and enduring ones are made by large herbivores. The reason for this is relatively straightforward. Animals like bighorn sheep and deer are relatively numerous, heavy, and walk on hard hoofs. Smaller herbivores like a chipmunk or a rabbit also make game trails. However, their light weight and soft feet make these trails faint and relatively short-lived. Game trails of predators are far fewer. To start with there are fewer predators than herbivores, and predators tend to have large soft feet meant to quietly and stealthily contact the ground. To find one of these predatory game trails and recognize it for what it is, gives you a lot of information on the local population and strategies of predator and prey.

Any game trail can be viewed as a written response to the physical attributes of the environment such as terrain, plant life, water sources, and so on. The animals then take into account their own biomechanics such as vision, sense of smell, and energy usage to formulate a solution that is best for their survival. When this equation is answered in the same way over and over, we have a game trail. So once a game trail, "a solution" is established it becomes a separate yet integral part of the environment itself. This incredible library of information falls into the category of esoteric knowledge in this day and age, but it wasn't always so. Those that know how to decipher this information can achieve a deeper more articulate presence and a more enlightened awareness in the environment.

So let's look at some of the common attributes many game trails have.

The first we can decipher as, "the easiest way to get there". While this might seem simple and straightforward this is often a more complex issue than what might be readily apparent. For instance attributes such as cliffs, thick brush, and water sources can influence the formation of a game trail that is many miles away from these barriers or strategic resources. Then the biomechanics of the animal itself will be an important factor in the formation and placement of a game trail. For instance animals such as deer and desert bighorn are "head heavy". That is to say they have long neck's that place their head

forward and high above their front feet, and they have relatively heavy heads, especially the males. This makes it difficult for them to go downhill even at a relatively shallow angle. Thus they will avoid this whenever they can. They are built relatively well to move across the level terrain or uphill. Because of this you'll often find two different game trails into and out of a water source. One is primarily going up and away from the water and the other one is primarily down and to the water. The trail going down to the water is usually at a shallower angle than the trail leaving the water. The primary reason for this is that these animals go slowly and cautiously down to the water, and don't want to spend a lot of time in a awkward posture. Whereas in leaving the water, the rough steep terrain can work to their benefit.

An established game trail is used entirely or at least partly used by other animals and of course they do this by trying to use its attributes to their advantage. For instance many game trails that are made by sheep or deer tend to have the soil churned up by their hoofs. This often makes the ground lighter in color, which makes it easier to follow in moonlight. These game trails are relatively level, or another way of interpreting this situation, is to understand they are in a different angle from the rest of the terrain, which makes them reflect differently in moonlight. This effects the equation for both predator prey alike.

There are a few game trails marked by ancient petroglyph's, some no longer in use and some that are still in use. The presence of these petroglyphs indicate that these game trails can be thousands of years old. Through evidence like this one can see how the population that made these game trails has waxed and waned through the ages. Sometimes game trails are use seasonally or only in a dry or wet year. You can deduce these kind of things by looking at the trail and seeing if there's any small annual plants growing undisturbed on the surface of the trail itself.

Another basic concept that is crucial to understanding game trails is being able to see and understand the affect of erosion. A game trail that is ancient will often affect the way a hill or alluvial deposit is eroding. This can often be seen when the erosion pattern does not fit well with the rest of the terrain. A game trail may be moving to the left or the right over the ages in a particular ravine. This is often one of the driving forces of erosion on that particular hillside or ravine. The process of erosion is accelerated by the animals breaking up the top level of the dirt and soil exposing it to wind, and often times it channels the rain water. Plants find it hard to grow on the trail itself in part because they are trampled by the

animals. And beneath an inch or two of loose soil the ground is hard packed by the weight of these animals, making it difficult for a root system to survive. These attributes initiate all kinds of erosion patterns associated with game trails.

Now that we have discussed some of the basics let's take an imaginary walk along a game trail and see what we can learn and experience. One of the more common experiences people have with game trails is that they are walking along through the desert or the woods and without any intention they find themselves walking on a game trail. Often times this is because of the overwhelming logic imposed by the terrain. Then there are other times consciously or subconsciously we have worked our way through a relatively complex equation and came up the proper and natural solution.

Here we must remember the solution for the deer is different than that of the coyote or the human being. So to truly understand what is written in a game trail one must understand such things as the way of the deer, the coyote, and the way of one's self. When you walk these game trails in silence and in a state of heightened awareness, you will learn such things. One of the primary things we must understand about any game trail is that we are very different animal than what made the trail we are on.

For instance unless this game trail was made by elk, we are taller than most any other animal, and so our eyes, our point of view, is much higher. This makes a difference on how the trail is laid out and how you should walk it. Remember, as far as walking goes we're the only two legged animals that will ever walk this trail. This too makes a difference as to how the trail is laid out and how we should walk it. All of this means we have to use our mind, our imagination, to conceive of things that are not readily apparent. For instance most animals, predator and prey, will sniff the trail from time to time to see who has been there and when. This is something beyond our capacity as humans. Yet armed with the right knowledge we can imagine these things in a way that is practical and revealing.

Because this knowledge, this language that is written into the landscape is a natural language to the human mind. We only need to take the time to learn it, and read it, to gain its wisdom. Like any library it is difficult to learn what is written in its books when people are talking, or concerned with interpersonal relationships. So it is in this library one should study alone and in silence to experience the full depth of what is written.

BGG 25: A CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL REVIEW

by Carlos Gallinger, thewayofthings.org

BGG 25 will be 30 years old next year. What is BGG 25 ? It is "Big-Game Guzzler number 25". More precisely it is a artificial water source meant to help out the desert bighorn sheep. It is the 25th artificial water source installed by the Society For The Conservation Of Desert Bighorn Sheep. It was installed in the Newberry mountains in 1986.

Much has happened since then in our culture and in technical knowledge. In world events things like the end of the Cold War, the rise of China, and 9/11 occurred. Much as happened in my own life. When it was installed I was married and had two little girls and now I'm a grandfather.

So let's start our history lessons at the very beginning. In 1986 I had been hiking and exploring the Newberry mountains 4 or 5 days a month for six years and had not seen a single desert bighorn sheep there. At that time the sheep population was much smaller and I did not use binoculars or spotting scopes. There really wasn't anybody that could teach me anything in depth about desert big horn sheep in the Barstow area. I was isolated in a pre-Internet world. But I knew they were there because I could read

sign. From time to time I would talk with the people in the Barstow BLM office which at the time employed 3 or 4 people. Now the land these three or four people covered is maintained by two separate agencies and 50 to 75 people. Times have changed. One day they told me about this water project that the Department of Fish and game and a volunteer organization were putting in the Newberry mountains and they needed some information as to where would be a good place to do this. They thought that I might have some input for this project. First thing we have to notice here is the Department of Fish and game is no more. It is now the California Department of Fish and wildlife. And yes it was changed because they were embarrassed by the word game. It is associated with hunting and this organization no longer want to emphasize or be openly associated with hunting. This reveals a huge change in our society since BBG 25 was built, and not just in a particular government agency.

So anyway, after some three-way communications, (there were no cell phones or answering machines at that time), I was told to wait at the end of a paved road out in the desert and I would get picked up by a

helicopter so I could show them some possible sites for this water project. So at the appointed day and time I was waiting there. A helicopter landed and one person got out. I would later get to know and learn much from the legendary Dick Weaver. But now I had never met or talked with any of these people. And with some very basic communications done with the helicopter blades still turning, I climbed in and we took off into the Newberry mountains. I gave them three or four possible sites and they later selected one of them.

This helicopter ride would be all but impossible now. If it were attempted it would take probably more than a year of preparation due to the growth of bureaucracy. At the time most people would describe the Newberry mountains as a wilderness however in the language and culture of the time this meant a place where very few people went and there were no rules, no clocks, and no hassles.

Now in our modern environmental/urban culture people understand the word wilderness as a legal definition and a place with exact boundaries that cynically could be described as a bureaucratic paradise or hell depending on your point of view. Of course the Newberry mountains now has this new legal and cultural definition applied to it. In all of this one can see that our culture has gone through many changes and the mountains very little.

Except perhaps for the rock quarry, which paid for BBG 25 as their mitigation project which in retrospect was a very small price to pay when you consider the tonnage of rock extracted.

During the installation of this guzzler I was there. It was strange to see 70 or 80 people back in this canyon working away. Until that time I was probably one of the few people that had ever been there and maybe the only one during historic times. It was a long walk back in this canyon and there were no minerals of any value or any springs. A year or two before the placement of this guzzler there was a tremendous thunderstorm that made the wash suitable for vehicle traffic. Prior that it would've been impossible to drive there. After the guzzler was built I became the caretaker which carried the title of the area captain.

The construction of this guzzler is such that it depends on rainwater to fill it up. The water is stopped temporarily by a small dam and then piped to three tanks which store the water. From there it goes to a float valve assembly which fills a small watering trough. Over the years this mechanism had its share of problems. Leaking pipes, stuck float valves, and freeze breaks. All of which I had to report or fix myself. One of the first jobs the area captain has to do is to lay out two or three transects. Typically these are squares or rectangles staked out in the ground, perhaps something like a 10' x 10' foot square. The purpose of these is to count the piles of sheep pellets on them

twice a year to gauge when and how many sheep are using this particular guzzler. The Newberry guzzler was unique in that it went unused by bighorn sheep for about 20 years. However, an array of other wildlife use the water. Finally, when the desert bighorn sheep started using BGG 25. they used it intensely.

The idea of using transects and droppings looks very quaint and interesting now. It depended on the old and ancient tradition of reading sign to do science. Nowadays when we want to understand what kind of use a guzzler is getting we use a trail camera. This technology has come a long ways fast. In 2008 I bought my first digital trail camera and it's first use was on BGG 25. It could hold about 135 pictures and I was amazed by how many pictures it could contain. The last one I bought in 2014 had the ability to take one picture every second for almost two months. And it had the ability to take pictures at night in infrared and could be programmed to suit your needs in still images or motion pictures as well as other improvements. The amount of information and knowledge gained with this technology is absolutely mind-boggling. This information age technology has changed the culture of the scientific and hunting community's immensely, and not everybody is aware of how much. Another interesting change that happened to BGG 25 is the addition of satellite telemetry for monitoring tank water level. When BGG 25 went in there was no Internet, and satellite access was limited to large corporations and the military and was very expensive. Now with the right encryption you can get on the net and look at the water level in these tanks in real time. If it is slowly and steadily going down we know that we have a leak. If it drops off rapidly and then stops we know that the sheep are drinking the water. Again this is part of that information age that BGG 25 is now part of. This guzzler as well as many others have provided for the desert bighorn sheep and other wildlife now for over 30 years, and has delivered a wealth of benefits to the wildlife by replacing springs that have dried up or are no longer available to wildlife due to human intervention such as the original Newberry Springs. It has also delivered a wealth of knowledge and information that the Department of Fish and Game (Wildlife) and the Society for Conservation Of Bighorn Sheep are putting to good use. With the effort and knowledge derived from many people and organizations the society has recently developed a new and innovative guzzler system or as they call it now "water for wildlife system", that is far more dependable and wildlife friendly than the old system. It is the brainchild of my good friend Glenn Sudmeier. This new system he developed is a tremendous technological advancement in desert wildlife management. It will enrich both wildlife and humanity for decades to come. It seems like anybody that remembers putting in BGG 25 is now somewhat

like Rip van Winkle living in a culture and technology very different than the one they started out in. And no doubt the people installing these new guzzlers, that is “water for wildlife system”, will in time find themselves as a Rip van Winkle character outliving their culture and the technology they’re comfortable with. So while we human beings are dealing with so many changes in our society the desert bighorn are

as they always have been. Whether the water is there artificially or natural their behavior is the same. After getting a drink of water they might butt heads for a while or perhaps they are there to give a new lamb it’s first drink of water. So in spite of the turmoil of our time and culture, with a little bit of effort we can make their presence a little more comfortable and their future a little more secure

THE ANALYSIS OF THE AMAZING SANTA CLAUS

By Robert T. J. DeMattei

In light of all the recent gun control legislation and the overzealous attack on the Second Amendment by some politicians, the question has come up in my mind about whether Santa Claus can deliver Red Ryder BB Guns. In order to answer this, one must first answer the question “Does Santa Claus exist?” We can determine the outcome of this problem by using philosophy, logic, and some advanced engineering mathematics. Consider the following issues.

No known species of reindeer can fly. However, zoologists have yet to classify an estimated 300,000+ species of living organisms. While a majority of these are insects, germs, and bacteria, there is still a possibility of flying reindeer.

There are 842,394,251.1 children in the world, defined as age of 18 or less, according to World Census Bureau, 2015 data, taken on 10/21/2015 at 9 pm —the most recent data available at the time of this writing. The calculations based upon this number are conservative. Do note, however, that the entire population of the planet starts out as a child in need of Santa Claus. However, since Santa will not service Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Atheists, Buddhist, delinquent, and children who are downright scoundrels, the workload reduces to ~44.85% of the total or 378 million. At an average rate of 3.5 children per household, this translates to 108 million homes. As a further assumption, let’s give Santa a break and assume there is only one good child in each home.

Assuming he travels east to west, Santa has 31 hours of Christmas to work, due to the different time zones, the rotation of the planet, and the speed of sleigh. This works out to 967.74 visits per second. This means, at each household, Santa has ~1/1000th of a second to park, hop out of the sleigh, slide down the chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the remaining presents under the tree, eat whatever snacks have been left, get back up the chimney, get back into the sleigh and move on to the next house. But let’s keep the math simple and assume

the stops are evenly distributed about the planet. This works out to 0.68 miles between stops and a total trip distance of 73.44 million miles, ignoring reindeer feeding and potty stops. This means Santa’s sleigh is moving at an average speed of 658 miles per second, or 3,158 times the speed of sound at sea level. For comparison, the fastest man-made vehicle, the Ulysses space probe, travels 27.4 miles per second and an ordinary reindeer can run, at tops, 25 miles per hour. Currently accepted laws of physics dictate any object will create a sonic boom when traveling beyond the sound barrier, yet no sonic booms from flying reindeer have ever been reported.

The payload on the sleigh adds another interesting element. Let’s assume each child gets only one Red Ryder BB gun with a synthetic folding paratrooper style stock, a takedown titanium rifled barrel, a rust proof, case hardened receiver made from a new ‘Unobtanium’ alloy, and an ivory bead front sight. This unique BB gun will fold into a small 6x6x24 inch box, which weighs only 1.2 pounds, shipping weight. Adding in the BAFF mandated, 3651 page BB Gun Safety Manual, this brings the entire package to an even 10.0 pounds.

This means the sleigh is carrying 54 million cubic feet of Red Ryders, assuming 100% efficiency in elves packing the sleigh. This is 72,000 times the volume of the average swimming pool. In addition, the sleigh is carrying 1,080 billion pounds, not counting Santa, which folklore describes, at best, as overweight. On land, conventional reindeer can pull no more than 300 pounds. Assuming “flying reindeer” could pull ten times the normal amount, we’ll need 126,000 flying reindeer. If the average flying reindeer weight is 1100 pounds, this increases the weight, not counting the weight of the sleigh, by another 69,300 tons. This is 2.5 times the weight of The Queen Elizabeth.

Given the average speed of the sleigh is 658 miles per second, one must consider the acceleration component as well. That is, the sleigh has to start, accelerate to maximum speed, and then decelerate to zero, in only 0.68 miles. Let’s assume half of

the ~1/1000 of second is traveling and half is inside the home. Thus, in 1/2000th of a second, a 250-pound Santa will experience g-forces, due to this acceleration, of 4,315,015 pounds.

Folklore also states Santa parks the sleigh on rooftops, while delivering the presents below. Let's assume the 108 million homeowners are willing to allow Santa and 126,000 reindeer to land on their rooftops. There is no rooftop made which will allow more than 609,000 tons to land, even for a very short time. The fact is a heavy snowfall will collapse most rooftops. Granted we all want to see this spectacle but clearly only if it is on the neighbor's house.

A reindeer, which is working this hard, creates an enormous demand for food and water. To simplify the math, let's assume the average flying reindeer has an incredibly efficient metabolism in comparison to the average non-flying reindeer. Therefore, this unique reindeer can manage to survive on only 245 pounds of food and 35 gallons of water in a 24-hour period. Given the number of reindeer, this works out to ~31 million pounds of food and over 4 million gallons of water. Where the elves obtain these supplies is indeed a mystery. How such a large magnitude of supplies can be carried in such a stealthily manner is something our military should investigate immediately.

It is clear 126,000 reindeer will create an enormous demand for Pooper Scoopers, regardless how efficient their metabolism. Since no one has ever complained of several hundred tons of reindeer poop on their lawns, let's assume Santa has elves that carry Pooper Scoopers. Even by the most conservative calculations, a hard working flying reindeer will produce over 73 pounds of poop in 24 hours. This translates to 26 million pounds of reindeer poop. How or where the elves dispose of more than 35 million cubic feet of poop without a hint of odor in a single day is quite a mystery and clearly an item of interest of which our sanitation engineers have yet to learn.

Folklore defines the sleigh as typical, not streamlined. Given there are 609,000 tons flying at an average speed of 658 miles per second means a total of 2.7×10^{14} joules of energy are expended. Assuming normal drag coefficients, the lead reindeers will absorb more than 14.3 quintillion watts of heat. In short, they will vaporize into flames while simultaneously achieving critical mass. The entire reindeer team will be vaporized within 4.26 thousandths of a second.

In conclusion -

If Santa believes he can deliver Red Ryder BB Guns on Christmas Eve, and then he is clearly smoking something serious. If the reindeers think they can pull this load, then they are smoking something serious as well. If Santa ever did try to deliver Red Ryder BB Guns on Christmas Eve, then he is quite dead now.

A cabbie picks up a nun. She gets into the cab, and notices that the VERY handsome cab driver won't stop staring at her.

She asks him why he is staring.

He replies: "I have a question to ask, but I don't want to offend you."

She answers, "My son, you cannot offend me. When you're as old as I am and have been a nun as long as I have, you get a chance to see and hear just about everything. I'm sure that there's nothing you could say or ask that I would find offensive."

"Well, I've always had a fantasy to have a nun kiss me."

She responds, "Well, let's see what we can do about that 1) you have to be single and 2) you must be Catholic."

The cab driver, very excited, says, "Yes, I'm single and Catholic!"

"OK" the nun says. "Pull into the next alley."

The nun fulfills his fantasy with a kiss that would make a hooker blush. But when they get back on the road, the cab driver starts crying.

"My dear child," said the nun, "why are you crying?"

"Forgive me, but I've sinned. I lied and I must confess, I'm married and I'm Jewish."

The nun says, "That's OK. My name is Frank, and I'm going to a Halloween party!"

THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER

This was interview done with 101 year old Hattie Mae MacDonald of Feague, KY.

Reporter: Can you give us some health tips for reaching the age of 101?

Hattie: For digestion, I drink beer, In the case of appetite loss, I drink white wine, For low blood pressure, I drink red wine. In case of high blood pressure I drink scotch. And when I have a cold I drink schnapps.

Reporter: When do you drink water?

Hattie: I've never been that sick....

WHISPERS FROM THE WHITE MOUNTAINS: AN UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE WHITE MOUNTAIN HERD

by Alexandra P. Few, Ph.D.

It was a summer of successful surveys for CDFW that was cut short by the promise of an early winter. It was October 1st, and it had been a warm but windy survey until that morning. Amy, Ellen, and I were the last 3 remaining in the mountains in this survey effort that started with 8 CDFW biologists. Shivering in all our clothes near the summit of the southernmost fourteener in the Sierra, we had to make a tough decision. Do we stay and try to find the last 6 collared ewes in the herd or do we call it? The forecast called for 50% chance of snow and 40 mph winds. The winds and clouds poured in from the west. These were not the conditions for success. We hiked out looking over our shoulders at the clouds building on the summit. The snow flurries falling at much lower elevations confirmed our decision to terminate the survey. We counted 82 bighorn, a good deal short of the 138 we counted the year prior.

These coordinated ground surveys for Sierra bighorn yield minimum counts of ewes and their associates, lambs and yearlings. In addition to the 8 herds of Sierra bighorn that we surveyed this summer, the Sierra bighorn crew, Steve Yeager and Inyo County unit biologist Mike Morrison spent the week of July 13-17 in the White Mountains counting the alpine



dwelling desert bighorn that reside there. This was our fifth attempt at a ground survey since 2010; this summer was finally a success. We counted 218 bighorn near the crest between the Barcroft Research Station and Boundary Peak in mid-July: 65 females, 46 lambs, 5 yearling ewes, 4 yearling rams, 19 unclassified adult ewes or yearlings and 79 adult rams.

Why the success this year instead of years past? Yeager, a long time eastern Sierra conservationist and bighorn hunter, credits the survey's success to green-up in the alpine caused by early summer rain. Unfortunately, this green-up did not benefit this year's White Mountain hunter. Yeager said, "It took about a month for everything to dry up. Once the grass dried up, they dropped off the sides. They never used to be that way. They were on top all summer." Prior to the prolonged drought, snowfields persisted on mountain tops into July, and lupine grew waist high.

Survey attempts over the last 5 years have been unsuccessful on both summer and winter ranges. According to Yeager, "We haven't had heavy snows to drive them down to their traditional winter range." In regards to summer ranges, CDFW unit biologist Morrison said, "The hypothesis is that with the prolonged drought the high elevation feed that sheep would normally utilize in summer has become less suitable due to a longer warming period and less precipitation. The movement from high elevation to lower elevations within the canyon headwaters could be driven by the need for water."

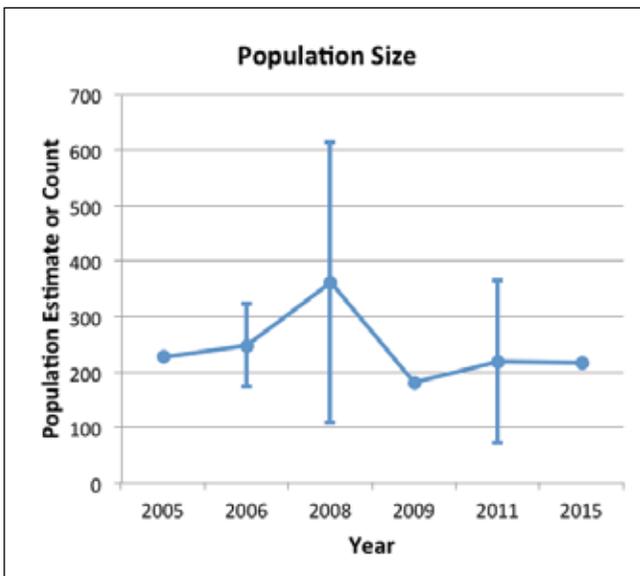


Figure 1. Population estimates from 2005 to 2015 for bighorn in the White Mountains excluding the subpopulation in Silver Canyon, which is not included in the hunt zone and surveyed separately. Mark-Resight estimates from winter helicopter surveys are displayed with confidence intervals. Minimum counts from summer ground surveys do not have confidence intervals.



Stray domestic goats photographed in July 2012 near 12,500 feet at Barcroft Research Station by a graduate student conducting climate research.

This summer's survey is particularly promising given that this population has been plagued by pneumonia. The first documentation of respiratory disease affecting these bighorn sheep was in the Silver Canyon area of the White Mountains in 2005. In 2009 captures revealed active infection in adults, and sick lambs were detected in all three subpopulations in the White Mountain herd. As recent as 2011, bighorn sheep have been observed near stray domestic goats in the alpine. Domestic sheep and goats on private lands on the west side of the White Mountains are the source of these strays, and White Mountain bighorn are regularly observed on their winter range near these domestic sheep and goat operations.

Successful ground surveys from the summers of 2005, 2009 and 2015 and helicopter surveys from the winters of 2006, 2008 and 2011 shed some light on how pneumonia has affected population growth. Fortunately, this disease outbreak did not result in an all age class die off as do many of these pneumonic events. In the worst years, we lost as many as 80% of lambs in the White Mountain herd. Between 2005 and 2015 lamb to ewe ratios varied from 21 to 55 lambs per 100 ewes. Continued low lamb survival means less recruitment of new adults into the herd. Surprisingly, ground and helicopter surveys have consistently accounted for about 200 bighorn over this 10 year period (Figure 1). These data suggest that, despite persistent pneumonia, the population is not experiencing a major decline. With 5 different outbreaks of pneumonia in California, the most recent detections occurring since 2013 in the Mojave ecosystem, the Orocopia Mountains and Joshua Tree National Park, the future of bighorn in California may appear bleak. However, the longer story from the White Mountains and the success of many bighorn herds in the Penninsular ranges provide hope.



A sick ewe in the Silver Canyon subpopulation in August 2010. Photo by Steve Yeager.



A lamb suckling its mother in Silver Canyon in August 2010. Photo by Steve Yeager.

WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION FLY-IN TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

WSF ON THE OFFENSE ON NEED FOR SEPARATION

by Kyle Meintzer, WSF Director

In our effort to advocate for Congressional and Agency solutions to the problem of transmission of deadly pneumonia from domestic sheep to wild sheep, the WSF Legislative Affairs Committee (LAC) conducted a 'fly-in' to the nation's capitol at the end of September.

Thanks to the efforts of Greg Schildwachter, our very talented legislative affairs consultant and lobbyist, our team consisting of LAC Vice Chair Darryl Williams, Board Intern Sierra Amundson, President of the American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians Dr. Peregrine Wolff, DVM, President & CEO Gray N. Thornton, Conservation Director Kevin Hurley and myself, a member of LAC, conducted two full days of high-level meetings with most of the key elected and appointed officials who can help us make critically-needed progress on the disease issue. Greg is a former staffer for Idaho Senator Mike Crapo, and worked in the Bush Administration for the White House Council on Environment Quality. Greg is a passionate conservationist and hunter himself.

Our objective on this trip was to generate Congressional support for getting the USFS and the BLM to move forward on identifying high risk-of-contact domestic sheep grazing allotments across the west, as well as to identify alternative grazing allotments for wool growers where there would not be a risk-of-contact. We also wanted Congressional and agency support in putting together collaborative meetings in each 'sheep state' where all interested stakeholders would be invited to participate in coming up with the best possible solutions to minimize and/or eliminate risk of contact between wild and domestic sheep and goats.

On the morning of Tuesday September 29th, the WSF team met with staffers for Senator Crapo and Senator James Risch, also from Idaho. Later that morning, we had a very productive meeting with USFS Chief Tom Tidwell along with five members of his Leadership Team. The USFS rollout of the Region 4 Risk of Contact Analysis has been less than stellar, which they freely admitted. But, Chief Tidwell promised to get things moving forward again and was very supportive of our 'coalition' strategy. WSF will be closely monitoring the USFS progress and will take the lead to develop stakeholder groups in affected states, at the Chief's request.

That afternoon, we met for thirty minutes with Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (NV) and two of his staffers, followed by a similar meeting with Senator Lisa Murkowski (AK) and two of her staffers. Both were



very important meetings and we believe we made considerable progress.

Senator Reid has long been a good supporter of the wild sheep conservation efforts of both Nevada Bighorns Unlimited and the Fraternity of The Desert Bighorn. As Senate Minority Leader, we need his assistance in gaining the support of his Democrat Senate colleagues, which he said he'd be happy to do. He also directed his staffers to work with us towards doing what they could to help us finally solve the problem. Senator Reid was very engaging and after a few minutes, began to tell us personal stories of seeing wild sheep in Nevada and how awesome he thinks they are. No doubt the fact that two of our team members were Nevada residents helped a lot in getting the meeting with him, as well as his interest in hearing us out.

Senator Murkowski wrote the FY16 Senate Appropriations subcommittee language based on our prior efforts, and therefore was very much in our corner. We thanked her for her efforts and she was very interested in asking us what else she could do to help us advance our agenda. Senator Murkowski is an avid sportswoman, as witnessed by a King salmon mount on the wall in her conference room, along with a photo of her holding it after she caught it. We guessed it probably weighed in at 58 - 60 pounds!

The following day we had individual meetings with three more Senators and their staffs; John Barrasso (WY), Jon Tester (MT), and Steve Daines (MT).

Senator Barrasso has been a ranching and domestic sheep advocate as well as friend for WSF and sportsmen, as are his two staffers who attended. Senator Tester was gracious enough to come in to

say “Hello” at the start of the meeting, but had to excuse himself to go to the floor for a crucial vote on a potential government shutdown.

Senator Daines, although just nine months into his first term, really hit a home run with us when he started talking about his passion for hunting, fishing and backpacking into Montana’s high backcountry. The fact his office was adorned with photos of his passions helped back up his words. He is looking forward to working closely with WSF on the separation and other issues including keeping federal public lands public and not sold to the highest bidder.

After lunch we met with a staffer from Congressman Mike Simpson’s (ID) office.

The meetings concluded that afternoon with Dr. Peregrine Wolff making a presentation on the disease issue to about forty Senate staffers and a few representatives from the American Sheep Industry. The staffers asked some very good questions, and while the woolgrowers attempted to cast some faulty concerns on the science, two things were abundantly clear: 1. They know the science supports disease transmission from domestic sheep to bighorns but just can’t bring themselves to admit it, and 2. They know they can

either work with WSF to find alternative grazing allotments or they can attempt to fight off radical ‘environmentalist’ groups, who want all sheep and cattle ranchers thrown off public lands completely.

That night we attended the annual banquet of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, formed over 26 years ago to support the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus; this caucus represents ~300 Congressmen and Senators, making it the largest caucus in Congress.

All in all, I would say the trip was very successful. We were very well received across the board and got virtually universal agreement and support for the Wild Sheep Foundation’s objectives.

One personal highlight for me was that when I got on my flight from Salt Lake City to Washington, Vice-President Dick Cheney and his wonderful and gracious wife, Lynne, occupied the two seats across the aisle.

(Note to Editor: The persons in the photo attached here are, from left to right, Dr. Peregrine Wolff, DVM, WSF President and CEO Gray Thornton, WSF Legislative Affairs Committee Vice-Chair Darryl Williams, WSF Board Intern Sierra Amundson, WSF Conservation Director Kevin Hurley, and myself, WSF Director and Legislative Affairs Committee member.)

AUSTRALIAN GUN LAW UPDATE

Here’s a message to warm some of your hearts from Ed Chenel, a police officer in Australia

Hi Yanks, I thought you all would like to see the real figures from Down Under. It has now been 12 months since gun owners in Australia were forced by a new law to surrender 640,381 personal firearms to be destroyed by our own government, a program costing Australia taxpayers more than \$500 million dollars.

THE FIRST YEAR RESULTS ARE NOW IN:

Australia-wide, homicides are up 6.2 percent, Australia-wide, assaults are up 9.6 percent; Australia-wide, armed robberies are up 44 percent (yes, 44 percent)!

In the state of Victoria alone, homicides with firearms are now up 300 percent. (Note that while the law-abiding citizens turned them in, the criminals did not and criminals still possess their guns!)

While figures over the previous 25 years showed a steady decrease in armed robbery with firearms, this has changed drastically upward in the past 12 months, since the criminals now are guaranteed that their prey is unarmed. There has also been a dramatic increase in break-ins and assaults of the elderly, while the resident is at home.

Australian politicians are at a loss to explain how

public safety has decreased, after such monumental effort and expense was expended in ‘successfully’ ridding Australian society of guns....’

You won’t see this on the American evening news or hear your governor or members of the State Assembly disseminating this information.

The Australian experience speaks for itself.

Guns in the hands of honest citizens save lives and property and, yes, gun-control laws affect only the law-abiding citizens.



NEWS OF INTEREST

Now that the internet 'flash fire' over Cecil the lion has subsided, the news can get back to what really counts! Below are some of the most interesting and relevant. For more news about CA sheep and sheep activities be sure to follow our [Facebook page](#).

[Caltrans proposes wildlife overpass on 101 Freeway](#) Mountain lions, bobcats and other wildlife would have less chance of becoming roadkill if the state adopts a plan to build a landscaped bridge over the 101 Freeway in Agoura Hills, supporters of the proposal said Wednesday. Los Angeles Times

[Pneumonia outbreak found in Joshua Tree bighorn sheep](#) Joshua Tree National Park officials confirmed a pneumonia outbreak in the park's bighorn sheep population. desertsun.com

[Wildlife Conservation Board Funds Environmental Improvement and Acquisition Projects](#) At its Sept. 3 quarterly meeting, the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) approved approximately \$31 million in grants to help restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat throughout California. Some of the 27 funded projects will benefit fish and wildlife including some endangered species while others will provide the public with access to important natural resources. Several projects will also demonstrate the importance of protecting working landscapes that integrate economic, social and environmental stewardship practices beneficial to the environment, landowners and the local community. CDFW News Release

[U.S. Trying to Protect Sage Grouse Without Listing It as an Endangered Species](#) The Obama administration announced on Tuesday that the greater sage grouse, a flamboyant bird that roams across 11 Western states, does not warrant a listing as an endangered species, an action that could have damaged oil and natural gas interests and the economies of many local communities. New York Times

[A Hunting Ban Saps a Village's Livelihood](#) Lions have been coming out of the surrounding bush, prowling around homes and a small health clinic, to snatch goats and donkeys from the heart of this village on the edge of one of Africa's great inland deltas. Elephants, too, are becoming frequent, unwelcome visitors, gobbling up the beans, maize and watermelons that took farmers months to grow. New York Times

[Hunting for emotion](#) The most logical response to the outpouring of concern over Florida's upcoming bear hunt is simple: Name one species that has been irreparably damaged by legal hunting in the United States since we instituted sustainable systems of hunting seasons and bag limits a century ago. Right. There isn't one. The Tampa Tribune

[2015 Youth Essay Contest to Focus on Mentoring Junior Hunters](#) The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and California Wildlife Officer Foundation are again co-sponsoring the annual ³Passing on the Tradition² essay contest for young hunters. This year's contest invites entrants to share their thoughts about their mentors as they learn to master the tradition of hunting. CDFW News Release

[Rams Show Up on Texas Trail Cams](#) Ten days ago, I set out the feed trough, an old, heavy wooden box I found in the barn. I attached short legs to it with a drill and long screws. Filled with corn, there was no telling what might find it. fieldandstream.com

[Minnesota dentist who killed Cecil the lion defends his actions in first interview](#) The Minnesota dentist whose killing of Cecil the lion fueled a global backlash emerged Sunday for an interview in which he disputed some accounts of the hunt, expressed agitation at the animosity directed at those close to him and said he would be back at work within days. Associated Press

[CDFW Seeks Public Comment on Supplemental Wildlife Plans](#) The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) seeks public comment on its nine draft companion plans, which will supplement the recently revised 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The public review period will run from Nov. 16, 2015, through Jan. 15, 2016. In addition, CDFW will hold a public meeting to present the plans and answer questions on Nov. 30, 2015, from 1-3 p.m. in the Natural Resources Building auditorium, 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento. CDFW News Release,

[Hunters harvest half of diseased Tendoy bighorn sheep herd](#) Hunters have harvested about half of the bighorn sheep herd in the Tendoy Mountains in a first of its kind hunt aimed at eliminating the herd to also eradicate disease. Helena Independent Record



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Ultima Thule Ram, Don Martin (Right)
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