

California Wild Sheep

Fall 2020



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Colin Jewett

Clark Kingston Mtns, 176 4/8

San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters

2019



ULTIMA THULE LODGE

CONTACT: DONALD C. MARTIN 310-766-3921



From the Editor's Desk

Glorious Fall and “hopefully” the start of hunting season (at least for the Northern Hemisphere) has arrived. I say “hopefully” because Southern Hemisphere was a complete bust with COVID-19. Let's think positive!

I feel more alive with the cooling air and the anticipation of hunting trips. This issue includes some great outdoors and hunting stories, info on new directors, fun humor, the 'Quit Moment' (we've all felt it), lot's of legislative info, a recap of Sheep Summit XXVII, AND MORE! And a big welcome to Zack Walton who has volunteered to assist on the newsletter!



Your feedback, ideas, articles, pictures & requests are always welcome. Best way to reach me is email: mike.borel@contextnet.com. Due date for input to the 4Q20 issue is November 20.

Wishing you actual trips AND great success in your hunting this fall!

Duck Poppers

This is a unique new way to serve duck that provides a great blend of flavors. And, as they say, everything is better with bacon!

Prep Time: 20 min • Cook Time: 10 min

Serving Size: 4 entree servings or more appetizer servings

Ingredients

- 4 wild duck breast halves (deboned)
- 1 regular brick of cream cheese (Refrigerate so it is firm and you are able to slice)
- 1 jar mild, medium, or hot jalapeno pepper slices
- 1 package of thick cut, uncooked bacon
- 1 bottle of Italian Dressing
- 1 box of wooden toothpicks

Directions

- Clean the duck breasts, de-bone and remove skin
- Place breast in a plastic zip bag or container and pour Italian dressing over breasts

- Marinate in the refrigerator for 3-6 hours
- Fire up the grill
- While the grill is preheating, remove the duck breasts from the marinade and butterfly them so there is a cavity in the middle.
- In the butterflied breast cavity, place a slice of cream cheese and several jalapeno peppers.
- Fold the butterflied breast back over so it surrounds the cream cheese and peppers.
- Wrap the breast with bacon.
- Secure the breasts from opening with the bacon wrap with toothpicks.
- When the grill is ready, grill breasts approximately 4-5 minutes a side (Medium rare is best).
- Remove from grill and serve each breast as an entree or cut it into bite-size portions to serve as appetizers.

Tips

Soak the breasts in salted ice water for 30 minutes before adding to italian dressing to help remove some of the blood. Rinse and pat dry before adding to the dressing.



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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.

Humorous outtakes provided by Tammy Scott

Published by Beverly Valdez, Gaiatec Services

Events

2020

- September TBD Wild Sheep Foundation Fly-In and Walk on Capitol Hill (Washington DC)
- November 20 Due date for articles for 4Q2020 CAWSF Newsletter
- December 11 Sheep Summit XXVIII in Ontario or Virtual Zoom Call

2021

- January 14-16 WSF Sheep Show, Reno
- January 20-23 GSCO Convention, Las Vegas
- February 3-6 SCI Convention, Las Vegas
- February 20 Due date for articles for 1Q2021 CAWSF Newsletter
- April 17-19 Desert Bighorn Council, Alpine Tx
- April TBD Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council meeting
- April 23 Sheep Summit XXVIII in Ontario
- April 24 CA WSF 19th Annual Fundraiser Sacramento, CA (DoubleTree)
- May 20 Due date for articles for 2Q2021 CAWSF Newsletter
- June 1 Ballots for CA WSF Director Elections presented
- June 28 Director Elections ballots due
- August 20 Due date for articles for 3Q2021 CAWSF Newsletter

President's Letter

What curious times we live in! As I write this, I sit quarantined in an apartment in Anchorage awaiting my Covid-19 test results and have to be tested again before I head off into the Alaskan bush to begin my Fall season. I have to admit, I'm thankful that there is going to be a season at all and my heart aches for all of the International Outfitters, guides, and hunters who have had their hunts canceled or postponed, especially all of our good friends in Canada. Travel, even here in the states, is increasingly difficult as more and more states roll back to previous restrictions and institute new restrictions all in the name of public safety. But like all things, this too shall pass, and hopefully some sense of normalcy will begin to restore itself.



I hope some of you were fortunate enough to draw some permits here in California for this fall as hunting locally may be the only option for some. I was lucky enough to draw a late season deer tag and I know of at least one California Wild Sheep member that was lucky enough to draw a coveted desert bighorn tag. I wish all of you luck this fall.

As many of you know, our 2020 Board of Director elections concluded and I would like to be one of the first to welcome our newest Director, Zack Walton, to the Board. Zack brings a lot of talent and experience to the Board and we appreciate him standing for election to the Board. Welcome Zack! In addition, I wish to thank outgoing Director Dwight Ortmann for all of his hard work on the Board and especially as a member of the Fundraising Dinner committee. Dwight has been a dedicated conservationist and supporter of CA WSF and we thank him for his years of service to our chapter.

Before leaving California, I sat down with Andy Moeckel and had a long talk about hunting and conservation on his podcast, Legion-DIY-Outdoors. If you have a couple extra hours or a long road trip planned for this fall, it is episode 144 and is available at: podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/legion-diy-outdoors or visit Andy's webpage at: <http://legion-ost-diy-outdoors.blubrry.net>.

It's never too early to start planning. Our 19th annual fundraising dinner will celebrate our 20th anniversary as a non-profit wildlife conservation organization. Please make every effort to save the date **April 24, 2021** at the Doubletree by Hilton in Sacramento. Our grand prize random drawing this year will be for a 14-day 1x1 Stone sheep hunt with Scoop Lake Outfitters for opening week August 1-14, 2022. There is no better opportunity at a great Stone sheep than this and opening week to boot! Tickets are on sale now at the CAWSF.org store (see also page 19 in this issue). You do not need to be present to win. There is a 25 ticket maximum purchase. Of the 500 tickets available for advance purchase, there are 475 still tickets available. An additional 100 tickets will be available the night of the dinner. This will sell out, so don't wait. Buy your tickets now. There's still plenty of time, if you wish to spread your ticket purchases out, plan ahead and make a small purchase each month leading up to our dinner on April 24, 2020 to maximize your chances to win this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Once again, I want to wish everyone a safe and successful fall hunting season and don't forget to get out and vote. I'll see you all in April.

Donald C. Martin
President, CAWSF

DID I WIN? "Y"

by Colin Jewett

This is a story of luck, hard work, highs, lows, bad weather, persistence, and the best friends anyone could ever ask for.

Lets talk about "LUCK", June 11th 2019 started out like most days, nothing particularly special going on, but I soon started getting texts from hunting buddies that the CA big game draw results were out, and that's when everything changed. I logged on to the CDFW website to check my results, and couldn't believe what I saw. Under the question "Did I Win?" was a capital letter Y, and next to it Zone 3 Clark and Kingston Mountain Ranges, it doesn't get any luckier than that.

To be honest my luck began many years earlier when in 2003 my good friend Andrew Pontious was drawn for a sheep tag in the Sheep Hole Mountains. Andrew hired Terry Anderson of San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters to guide him on his hunt. I spent 14 days with Andrew and Terry during that hunt. It was during that time that I became friends with Terry, and I began guiding for San Gorgonio the following season. Over the last 16 years I've helped on a little over 60 sheep hunts, a number of them in the Clark and Kingston unit, and it was this experience that ultimately led to my success.

As soon as I shared my luck with my friends I immediately started getting messages offering help on the hunt, and every single one of them came through for me. Ed Kerr was with me on every scouting trip and all 23 days in the field hunting. Andrew, who is the lead guide for Terry and San Gorgonio Outfitters, had a full schedule of clients, but still came out between hunts to help. Long time friend Don Carpenter, who I helped on his 2017 Nevada Desert Bighorn hunt, came down for two separate weekends to help, Michael Cole was there with Ed and I opening weekend, and Patrick Butler flew down to help and was there at the final moment.

Did I mention weather? You expect it to be hot, and you expect it to be cold, and it was both of those things, but Mother Nature really threw a big curve ball this year. Snow and more snow, I had a pretty good idea of where I wanted to hunt after my preseason scouting, but on November 29th during my last scouting trip we got hit with our first snow storm. When I crawled out of my sleeping bag I was greeted by a 10 inch blanket of snow, my thermometer registered 14 degrees. This unexpected weather shuffled the sheep around and restarted the scouting process.



Colin Jewett, Clark/Kingston Mountains

December 7th opening day started with more apprehension than I've ever had during any hunt, it's a high stakes once in a lifetime if your lucky deal for most of us, and all of that was running through my head. The Clark Kingston is a huge unit, but it was feeling pretty crowded opening day, with two of the other 4 hunters and their outfitters spread out all over. Both of the areas I had planned on hunting were already occupied, so Ed, Michael and I hiked into another area, where Ed had glassed up a ram the night before. Not seeing anything opening weekend and needing to be back to work Monday morning we headed home Sunday night. The good news was that it's a long season and I knew I had plenty of time. The two other hunters both killed nice rams, and had broken camp and cleared out by Tuesday of the first week, now I would have the unit to myself until the last hunter came out at the end of January.

Ed and I were headed back out Friday night the 13th, knowing I had the next three weeks off to focus on nothing but my hunt. We hunted hard, glassing for countless hours over that next week, and hiking into some remote areas you just cant see without getting your boots dirty. Spotting sheep wasn't a problem, we were seeing plenty of ewes and smaller rams, but we just weren't finding the mature ram groups you expect this time of year. On the third weekend Don Carpenter joined us and we hiked into one of the lower elevation wilderness areas in the unit, we glassed up over 20 ewes, and on the way back out ran into a group of 7 rams. One of the rams was definitely

mature, but he just wasn't what I was looking for, and we were just 2 weeks into a 2 month long season. We continued hunting up until the day before Christmas still not finding what we were looking for.

More snow, on December 26th we were hit by the heaviest snowfall the high desert had seen in over 10 years, I-15 was shut down over Mountain Pass which is on the southern end of the unit. Luckily we were able to get into camp. With heavy snow covering everything except the lowest ground we shifted our focus to the lower elevations with the thought that the sheep will have been forced down. I can't tell you how many hours were spent behind the spotting scopes, and how many miles were put on our boots, but I can tell you I started to get worried, ok I started to get depressed, and that's when my friends really lifted me up. I thought I would have put my tag on my ram by the first week of January before I had to go back to work, but that didn't happen.

Now that I was back to work, I'd only be able to hunt weekends, so we made the most of it. The second weekend of January Don made another trip down and we found a group of 5 rams, in a very huntable spot. There was one really nice long horned ram, but he just wasn't there yet and I ended up passing. We all headed home Sunday night, and I was wondering how much longer could I pass up rams, the clock was ticking for sure. I reached out to my friend Patrick Butler, whom I met while guiding his father Dick in the Marble Mountains with San Geronimo. Patrick booked a flight into Ontario for Friday the 17th. As soon as I finished work Friday I loaded the truck and headed to the airport to pick up Patrick, from there we were off to camp to meet up with Ed. We ate dinner and came up with a plan for the next day.

Saturday morning Andrew rolled into camp exhausted but he was there anyway, and we headed out to execute our plan. Ed dropped Patrick, Andrew, and I off in the dark on the southern edge of the wilderness and then took off to glass his way around to the other side where he'd be picking us up. We hiked and glassed our way the 16.2 miles from one side of the range to the other spotting a number of ewes and one small band of rams. The largest was the same mature ram I'd passed back on the third weekend of the hunt, I passed him again. We hiked out by headlamp toward the truck headlights Ed had turned on to guide us in. We got into camp late, ate some of the amazing steaks Patrick had brought down with him (his family owns the Wagon Wheel Market near Lake Oroville), said goodbye to Andrew who had to be back at work Sunday morning, and we went to bed without a plan.

I didn't know when I woke up Sunday that this would be the day. We scarfed down a quick breakfast, had some coffee and decided to rest our feet glassing from the road. Patrick and I got set up and Ed continued a mile further down the road in his truck.

We had only been glassing for about 30 min before I spotted a group of sheep feeding in a canyon 3 miles away, Patrick got his scope on the canyon and spotted a couple of rams below the group I hadn't seen. We jumped in the truck and drove to where Ed was set up for a better angle. It didn't take long to decide that there were at least two rams that needed a closer look, so we packed up our gear and started hiking across the flat to close some distance. When we were about a mile and a half out we set up and started the debate about which of the two rams was the best one. They had very different looks, one was shorter and heavier, and the other had really impressive length and dropped down well below the jaw line before flaring out. I decided that I was definitely going to take the longer ram if I could.

We scanned the terrain and came up with a plan, Ed would move in another half mile and set up with a full view of the canyon, while Patrick and I would swing around to the south where we could hike up the canyon adjacent to the rams before climbing to the ridge for the shot. It was a tricky stalk, we were crossing the flats mostly exposed until we reached the base of the mountain. Once out of view in the side canyon we quickly made our way up the canyon then climbed to the ridgeline we hoped would give us a shot. A quick look at onX maps told us the shot would be between 400 and 500 yards once we reached the ridge. We carefully approached the ridgeline, took our hats off and peaked slowly over the ridgeline. We were immediately pegged by the number two ram, 400 yards away, it never ceases to amaze me how acute their eyesight really is. He had moved higher up and was bedded with a couple ewes. He slowly got up looking directly at us and started walking toward the head of the canyon. I had a decision to make, We hadn't yet located the ram we were after, and I had a clear shot at this ram. I also knew that he might pull all of the sheep out of the canyon. I rolled the dice one more time and passed on the ram, knowing the other one had to be in the canyon.

We scanned the canyon searching for the long horned ram, it was a huge relief when I heard Patrick say "I got him". The ram was still bedded lower in the canyon, I got the rifle set up across my pack and Patrick gave me the range of 460 yards, I adjusted the elevation on the scope guessed the wind at 10 mph, then the ram stood up looking in the direction of the ram that had left.

The moment of truth, I squeezed off the shot and hit the ram. Set up beside me Patrick was able to see the vapor trail through the spotting scope, and said the hit was forward and left of where I'd been aiming, I adjusted for more wind and fired right over his back, I held a little lower on the third shot and made a high lung shot, he was still standing so I held lower and squeezed off the 4th and final shot which passed right through the heart, he made a 20 yard run and piled up.

When I finally realized he was down, I was so overcome with emotion I started crying, this was the 23rd day of the hunt, and it had been filled with so many highs and lows, so much adversity, so many wonderful days and nights spent with friends that sacrificed to be there with me on this journey. These thoughts filled my mind as Patrick and I gathered our gear and traversed around to the mouth of the canyon to meet up with Ed, this hunt belonged to all of us and I wasn't walking up to the ram without them. I'm a lucky guy, and I'm so grateful for the friends I was able to share this moment with.

I'll shut up now and let the photos tell the rest of this story.



Colin Jewett with San Geronio Wilderness Outfitters team / friends

WHY DO WE HUNT – A VERY COMPELLING RESPONSE PENNED 2500 YEARS AGO!

by Robert Keagy

CA WSF Board Member, Distinguished Life Member

I know that I am often caught lacking a clearly organized, coherent response to “why do you (or anyone) hunt?”. Saying “It is great and challenging fun” is a bit unconvincing, and a bit self-centered, as it does not claim or establish any clear societal benefit.

I'm an ardent history buff, and recently came across a 2014 article in the “Wildlife Society Bulletin”, by Christos K. Sokos et al, of the Hunting Federation of Macedonia and Thrace. He explores the individual and societal impact of hunting as seen by the Hellenic Greeks of 2500 years ago, including citations from the writings of Xenophon, the author of the Anabasis (a.k.a. “The March Upcountry” or “The Ten Thousand”).

As in many professional publications, there is an “abstract”, summarizing the general thesis of an article. I would appreciate each of you reading this. It struck me as an astonishingly relevant response to “why hunt?” today, some 2500 years later:

“**ABSTRACT:** Urbanization and other threats to hunting culture have inspired growth in research that addresses the role of hunting in western society today. This literature addresses the juxtaposition of non-subsistence hunting and modern western models of wildlife management associated with either the public trust doctrine or market economics. Insights for understanding this juxtaposition can be drawn from the historical efforts to frame hunting as a symbolic, versus subsistence, activity in ancient Hellenic (Greek) culture. For the ancient Hellenes, hunting offered the opportunity to acquire edification, test skills, and to enjoy a feeling of freedom, and did so for all citizens, even for women. Edification meant



more than knowledge about hunting to the ancient Hellenes. It referred to respect for the purity of nature and a hunting ethic, and strict adherence to hunting norms. Testing skills dictated fair chase, where tools and techniques used should not eliminate the need for physical and mental dexterity. Feeling of freedom meant that hunters became useful for themselves and for society through skills acquired by hunting; a modern society might define this as self-sufficiency or independence, which contributes to a greater societal good. These symbolic dimensions of hunting developed in ancient Hellas could provide guidelines for the social identity that hunters hope to develop in our modern world by improving hunting education, promotion, and management.” (copyright 2014 The Wildlife Society)

To read the full article, here is the relevant link:

https://faculty.cnr.ncsu.edu/nilspeterson/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2016/10/Sokos_et_al_2014_WSB.pdf

FIRST A BOW, THEN A RIFLE, HUNT

by Gerard Smith
CA WSF Member

I could hardly believe what I was reading when I found out I drew a big horn sheep tag, this was a hunt of a life time. Before the hunt, I did tons of scouting in the area, got to know it well, along with some awesome people along the way. I hunted with my bow the first month, coming within 30 yards of some sheep, but no shooters. I almost got Mr. Glenn Davis's book ram with my bow after a great stalk that had got me within 75 yards, until the wind shifted and the ram took off, only for my arrow to fall just short under him. All this had been watched by one of the Dry Creek Outfitters guides, Wayne, whom I just met that morning. I had received a text saying and I quote, "This is Wayne Robertson with Dry Creek, nice stalk, you were close. He vanished from my view as you arrived".

The weekend of the hunt came, I felt extremely excited and ready. My Uncle, Tad Smith, joined me on this hunt. When we arrived at camp, my Uncle was impressed to say the least. The camp that Dry Creek Outfitters puts on is something you would see on one of the hunting channels. After meeting everyone, my Uncle was curious who else was hunting. Everyone replied, just Gerard tomorrow, he couldn't grasp that there was almost ten of us total and only I was hunting. They all laughed and said, I guess we are covering ground. We sat down for dinner and Tim Mercer lead us in grace, setting the moment by giving praise and thanks for all of our blessings in which we have been provided on this hunt. After dinner, we headed to bed early. In the morning all of the guys were getting assigned tasks and I was told I would be riding with Matt St. Martin, taking me to an area where he knew some older rams had been crossing, with one we had picked in mind. It was an old bruiser, with a sinus infection, I was told by Tim, a true guru of sheep, we could tell by the abscess on the back of the sheep's head.

Prior to the hunt with Dry Creek, before my actual hunt had even begun and while I was hunting with my bow, I saw Tim was at camp and this man still gave me a hand. When scouting with Tim, he and I sat looking at a young chocolate ram, I learned so much in an hour from him, about all the ram species of the five deserts in the country, their habitat, foods, do's and don'ts. I knew I was in good hands, I could



Gerard Smith and his desert bighorn from the Cady Mountains

have harvested a ram the first day of the season and on several occasions. Many people asked, why hire a guide? I would reply, they know more, have seen more and love what they do and I could not have been more right about these guys.

We took off, making an hour drive out of the camp and start splitting up. Matt and I get to the spot, getting our tripods out and chairs, we start to glass, it is still dawn. Matt said, he has two rams, we make eye contact and he looked surprised. He said, one of them is pretty nice and asked me what I thought. I told him I would let him know once he lets me look at him. The only thing I could see was the ram's backside, a few moments later, he turned. I told Matt, he is nice and wide, a chocolate and looked pretty old. Matt asked me if I would shoot him, but I wanted to take a closer look. Matt radioed his father, the owner and guide, Cliff St Martin. Cliff had been out scouting the area for days and Matt had just arrived and wanted a second opinion on the quality of the other rams that Cliff and the other guides had seen in the area.

When Cliff arrived, he took a look. Cliff said it was a nice legal ram, what do you think about it Gerard? I told him, it is like I custom ordered him, chocolate, wide, old. Lets go shoot him! Cliff smiled and said he was going to back off and guide us in. Matt and I got ready, leaving my Uncle Tad for a play by play. We discussed our approach, so that we could get within range and hopefully not be spotted by the rams. We started the trek in, stopping to glass

occasionally to keep track of the animals, while Tim is communicating with Matt through his ear piece. As we are walking, I watch Matt drag his foot as if he was leaving a marker to find our way back, but that didn't make much sense. A little later, as we approached the hillside, I saw Matt dragging his foot again, when I noticed he was dragging his foot to watch the dust and the direction of the wind. This was reassuring that I was with the right guys on this hunt again.

As we got to the top, just before we crest, Matt peeks his head over and tells me the rams are right there at 340 yards, having a built in range finder in his binos. I get into position, trying to keep my composure, surprisingly I am calm and not feeling the stress I had been feeling prior to this actual hunt. I see it, there he is 340 yards broadside and for the life of me, it seems like every rock underneath me were like porky pine quills, I was trying to wrestle around to get comfortable without letting our presence be known. I just couldn't get settled in to make an ethical shot. As the ram walked out of sight, I exhale not feeling beaten, but disappointed to say the least. Matt then asked, what do you think about dropping down out of sight and side hilling it, getting a different angle to see if that works? I said, yes.

We descend and side hill, Matt popped his head up once again and said their right there, again at 340 yards. He places his pack down, I lay down, this time it's like laying on a bed of down, my elbow locking in on my trigger finger side. My scope is fixed on the ram with no vibration. Matt reminds me that my safety is on, which was great, because during everything that was going on, that was the one thing I had forgot. Matt then tells me, shoot when you're ready, when you have the shot it is the upper ram, do you see them both. I did see him, the only problem was he was looking right at us and the smaller ram was acting suspicious, as if he knew something was wrong. I could feel the stress in the air, waiting for the ram to turn. He gave me his shoulder and at the angle we were at I knew it would go right across his vitals.

I took a breath, exhaled, and my 6.5 creedmor, shooting a 127 grain Nosler goes off. I ask where is he? I then saw him, the ram stumbled back on his two hind feet, looking like a giant tree getting cut down. The ram is down, I said and proceeded to give



Gerard Smith taken with Dry Creek Outfitters team

Matt the strongest, most excited hug I've ever given another man, especially one I've only met twice. We agreed after celebration that I would walk across the valley, while Matt kept an eye on where the sheep went down. Once across the valley, Matt once again guided me to my ram. He was everything I wanted in a guide and even more.

This hunt wasn't about the kill, it meant so much more, the camaraderie of brothers and of family experiencing a once in a life time hunt. I can not thank the guys from Dry Creek enough. Tim, Cliff, Wayne, Kirk, Carlos, Kayden and my Uncle Tad, thank you for making a dream come true.

GET READY!
**19TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER
AND BANQUET**
APRIL 24, 2021



Are YOU a CA Wild Sheep Foundation Life Member? NOW is the time to join or upgrade!

SHOW YOUR TRUE COMMITMENT TO THE WILD SHEEP OF CALIFORNIA AND THE WORLD! JOIN OR UPGRADE YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY.

You will be joining a hard working, and hard hunting, group of CA WSF Distinguished Life members when you join or upgrade. Meet our Distinguished Life Members:

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Join as a Life Member (\$500)

Make a commitment now to continue PUTTING AND KEEPING WILD SHEEP ON THE MOUNTAINS of California! Join CA WSF as a Life Member and receive ONE chance to WIN the special Life Members hunt in 2020.

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Upgrade your CA WSF Life Membership to DISTINGUISHED Life Membership (\$1,000) to receive THREE chances to WIN the special Life Members hunt in 2021.

You may also join at the Distinguished Life Member level for \$1,500.

All Distinguished Life Members receive a PELOTON 240 VEST from Kuiu emblazoned with the CA WSF logo.

THE QUIT MOMENT

Excerpted from MtnTough's Dustin Diefenderfer

Only about 10% of Western Elk Hunters are successful each year.

And when you look specifically at those that kill mature bulls on public land with OTC tags... the number drops to around 3%.

If you ask people about the data, some will say it's about "finding the right spots."

Others will say it's about how many days they hunt in the field.

Still others will point to skills like calling or shooting longer distances...

Of course these are all important factors and certainly some luck plays a role...

But I believe it's something else all together.

Something I don't see many people talking about.

What is it that separates the 10% of successful hunters from the other 90%?

The "Quit Moment"

We've all been there, on the side of a mountain, mentally exhausted.

Tired. Cold. Hurting. Hungry. Thirsty. Beat down.

I call it the Quit Moment.

Most guys don't talk much about it.

It's that moment when thoughts start creeping in. Thoughts of home. The kids. Work. A warm bed. Good food. Reasons to leave.

Do I push deeper until I find elk? Can I really put in another day of this? Is this safe?

Before they know it, the decision's already been made...

And they find themselves back home.

The hunt is over.

At first it felt good.

Then a few days later, the regret sets in and starts to eat at them.

The "what ifs" run through in their minds.

What if I had just stayed one more day? What if that bull was just over the next ridge? What if I would have worked harder?

It's never about the fact that they came home empty handed. Any day spent hunting in the wild is better than most.

The regret is more about knowing they could have given it more. That the mountain won. That they gave up. That their family knows how much this hunt meant to them only to see them come home unsuccessful.

The truth is: during that Quit Moment, most people give up.

Regardless of where they're hunting. Or how far they can shoot.

It's about something else entirely.

So - what's the difference?

After a lifetime of backcountry hunting and training other hunters, I believe the thing that separates the 10% from the rest is not what most people focus on during the year.

Don't get me wrong, the right gear is vital.

Scouting and knowing the right locations is a game changer.

Being a good shot is critical.

But at the end of the day, every incredible hunting story I've heard of or been a part of, has a Quit Moment right in the middle.

Whether it was some wicked storm that blew in. Or we ran out of water. Or we got cliffed out or stuck in some blow down.

Most great hunting stories have a moment when things get really bad on the mountain.

It's the moment we all get tested, both mentally and physically.

The difference is this: the guys that are successful, they push through that Quit Moment, keep going... and usually end up with success at the end of the story.

The other 90% stop. They go home. They can't get through that moment. And their story ends right there.

And I believe it comes down to one thing: Mental toughness.

Ever since I was young, I noticed certain people had it... and others didn't.

The ability to persevere. To never quit.

To push themselves mentally and physically beyond what most humans are capable of.

And most of the consistently successful backcountry hunters that I've met and learned from, they have it too.

That's why they can make it 7-10 days on the mountain barely seeing an animal. Hike 10 miles a day with a heavy pack. Climb 1,000s of feet of elevation day after day.

Survive whatever nature throws at them. The harshest temperatures. Wicked snow. Frigid cold.

And most importantly, that's why they can push through the Quit Moment.

I believe Mental Toughness is what separates the successful backcountry hunters from the ones that get crushed by the mountain.

Consistently successful public land backcountry hunters are just plain mentally tough.

They have something most guys don't.

But the cool thing is: getting it is no secret... it comes down to hard work. You have to earn it.

NEW DIRECTOR ZACK WALTON Q&A

Mike Borel asks the important questions!

1. What does wild sheep hunting and conservation mean to you?

The hunting of wild sheep cannot occur without the conservation efforts of hunters. Growing up without any interest or knowledge of sheep hunting, I would never have had the chance to chase wild sheep without the conservation efforts of generations before me. Because of that, I feel a responsibility to continue the traditions of so many by doing my part to ensure the proliferation of wild sheep for hunters that will follow. Without having been in the mountains in pursuit of wild sheep, I would never have experienced the deeper passion to help wild sheep populations that I hold today. Without conservation, there can be no sheep hunting and without sheep hunters there would be no conservation of wild sheep.

2. What is your story? Where are you from? What do you do? Who do you love?

I was born and raised in the middle of the Central Valley—the son of two passionate bowhunters. My dad started bowhunting in the 1970s and when my parents married, my mom joined him in the woods. Mom and Dad took my brother and I across the Western U.S. and my love for the outdoors and wild places has never waned.

I will always consider myself a deer hunter. Although my Dad has been an admitted elk-aholic since the 1980s, our primary pursuits have been all of the species of deer in North America. It wasn't until college that I truly entertained the idea of bowhunting the mountain species. Knowing what was involved in that endeavor, I decided to get a career that would allow me the opportunity to fund my bowhunting dreams. I have been in medical device sales for 15 years and have spent much of that time racing between the high-stress of working in operating rooms and the snail-pace of the sneaky spot-and-stalk bowhunter. The abrupt transitions between those two lifestyles are not always easy to manage. I never imagined as a kid that I would have been able to do and see all the things I have at this point in my life, and because of that, I can't picture living any other way.

Of course, the driving force behind all of my passions is my wife, Anne. She keeps me in line, focused and grounded. There is no doubt that I married "out of my league."

3. What ideas do you have for helping CA WSF to grow in membership and impact?

The best thing about joining an already successful operation is that you can focus on small details to help improve upon what is already working. California Wild Sheep has been on a very successful track for many



years now and I look forward to helping improve its success through focusing on some smaller details of the Foundation instead of trying to impose massive disruption through large changes.

I have been working for many years to help bring in members by hosting multiple tables at each year's fundraiser, in partnership with current board director Shawn Wood. New member recruitment is always nice, but true involvement by new—and current—members is what drives an organization. By continuing to bring in the right new members, it will have a positive impact on CA WSF.



Back of the "pink vest"

4. Tell us about your group of friends that come to the CA WSF Fundraiser every year, with one member wearing a pink vest?

Several years ago, we came up with an idea to help boost fundraising to CA WSF among our group of annual attendees. The idea was to punish whoever in our group made the biggest mistake while hunting throughout the year. The punishment would be

making them wear a hideous vest to the fundraising dinner. I asked my neighbor if she could create the vest out of some hot pink material with white, fluffy cartoon sheep on it and the “pink vest” was born. The



“winner” not only has to wear the vest throughout the entire fundraiser, but they are also the first to donate to the Give A Lamb A Drink program (GALAD). Of

course, a bunch of us follow with our own donations. Even though it started as a way to make fun of each other, it has helped raise thousands of dollars for GALAD and creates quite a few conversations and questions from other members. We have even had dinner-goers ask where they can buy their own pink vest!

5. Anything else you want to share?

Every hunter goes through stages in their hunting life. I am entering the period where I can start focusing more on the future of this way of life that I hold so dearly. Positive promotion of hunting, active participation in conservation, ensuring opportunity for future generations and engaging in youth involvement in the outdoors are all ways I am actively working to fight for our right to hunt. I urge every hunter to find their avenue for promoting their passion of hunting and the outdoor lifestyle and get more involved today!

HISTORIC EXPANSION OF HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES ON PUBLIC LANDS

Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt recently announced the historic opening and expansion of over 850 hunting and fishing opportunities across more than 2.3 million acres at 147 national wildlife refuges and national fish hatcheries.

As we inch closer to hunting seasons, join us in thanking Secretary Bernhardt and United States Fish and Wildlife Service Director Aurelia Skipwith for their commitment to sportsmen and conservation in the United States.

This rule is the single largest expansion of hunting and fishing opportunities by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in history.

Safari Club International and its members across the country played a key grassroots role in this historic announcement, submitting more than 500 comments through our Hunter Advocacy Action Center urging the FWS and Secretary Bernhardt to expand access for sportsmen and women.

“We commend the Trump Administration and Secretary Bernhardt for proposing the single largest expansion of hunting and fishing opportunities in history,” said W. Laird Hamberlin, CEO of Safari Club International. “This monumental step will increase access to our country’s unmatched public lands for hunters and anglers alike. America’s sporting heritage plays a vital role in many states’ economies, and hunters are the single largest source of funding for their conservation efforts. Outdoor recreational access is important now more than ever, so hunters across the nation have every reason to be thankful to this Administration for prioritizing this unprecedented expansion of opportunity for sportsmen and women.”

EL GROUPO

by Walt Limon
CA WSF Member

Former local resident hunter goes back home to harvest the oldest Desert Bighorn in California's History to date in the nearby mountains...It all started back in 1987, 32 years ago when ram hunts first became available. I was consistent year in and year out, making that tag application process, hoping that one day my dream would become a reality.

Well, fast forward to 2019. Still waiting on the results until one night at work sitting in my bulldozer, I read on social media that the results were out. So anxiously I went to the sight and the Bighorn results were the first that appeared. I read "Y" on the part that says, "Did I win", doing a double take and making sure it's what I had read. I was in awe, saying, "No way!" I sat there for a bit in disbelief. It was true! I was a winner in the draw! Instantly I called my family at midnight leaving voicemails. It was a feeling like I had just won the lottery – ram lottery at that!

So, the preparation begins; the "do-alls" for this monumental once-in-a-lifetime hunt. The guide selection is first and that was a little challenging. There were a few considered, but when that time came, I chose Dry Creek Outfitters. I had read a lot about their achievements and past hunter success and satisfaction. Next on the agenda was conditioning. In between all this, my lady and I are headed to the required orientation in Sacramento. There I receive my tags and got to meet my guides in person firsthand. Great company! During all this time, I'm hiking for miles with a pack of weights and it's starting to be the norm, which continues for 3 months. About a week and a half before my hunt, the flu hits me. It's so bad it puts me in bed for 2 days. Here I am thinking I have this monumental hunt approaching and now this!

Well, it's finally here the Friday before the opener all packed and ready to hit the road, anxiously ready to do my dream hunt. I leave Morongo Valley, and on my way stop off to go by my mom's to pick up some of the delicious food for the trip, and, of course, her blessings as usual. As I am leaving her town, I am starting to realize that this is one hunt I may never do again, and the emotions and feelings start to flow. This is the real deal, and the blessed feeling of being chosen. Along the way, I realize that I should double check my rifles accurately to make sure it's all good and of course what better place to check it but Sheep Hole mountains. The rifle checks great! Onward to the destination to meet my guides and to set up camp!



Walt Limon with Dry Creek Outfitters team
with his desert bighorn from Clipper Mountains

The campsite is in the Clipper Mountains, a familiar area I would see daily as a high school student from a school bus window on Old Route 66. I made it to the camp site early and all set up patiently waiting for the guides: Matt, Clay and Jake. We all got together that evening and all is well. These are a great group of guys. After all the comradery, we discussed the game plan for the opener.

Saturday arrives and we soon spot sheep, six ewes, and 2 rams; nothing worthy. Later that day we make a move and in no time my guides spot more. Still nothing that deserves a closer look, so the day ends, and we are headed back to camp.

During the day, the other guides, Clay and Jake were also glassing in their locations to see if any potential shooters were being spotted. Eventually, we all end up back at camp and the guys are going over their notes to prepare for Sunday.

Sunday morning, I am up at 4 am getting ready for the day. The winds pick up, and it is a bit chilly. This time we are on the other side of the mountain range. We are soon spotting sheep again, more ewes and four rams, all young ones, cookie cutters, the ones you would say, "hurry and grow older". With that said, the future for ram hunting looks great!

The evening is here and my guide, Matt, gets a call from Clay. He's got two rams spotted, one possibly a shooter. We pack up and head in Clay's direction. Sure enough, they are spotted four miles away, feeding. While glassing, it soon starts to rain. We decide to put

the rams to bed and head back again in the morning.

Monday starts with a nice wind from the north. We are back at the location on the south side of the two rams, while our spotter, Clay is to the north. Our hike is four miles up the mountain. We locate the two rams. Unfortunately, they are not what we were looking for. They were both younger rams, so we make the decision to hike back out. Once we got off the hill, Matt, with his keen eyes, picks up nine more rams on a hillside grazing just like cattle about five miles from our previous location. Matt informs me that there is one to keep in mind, and that we will get a closer look in the morning. The day comes to an end, and we are back at camp once again to discuss Tuesday's plan. Tuesday comes quickly, and the morning is beautiful. No wind or rain in sight. The guys are up and the layout is set. There is something that a hunter feels deep down inside; it is going to be a great day. You can just feel that vibe. Even my guide, Matt, says, "We are going to get you one today". While still in camp, I remember Guide Jake giving me the heads up on the area we will be headed to. His comment was, "It's a little tough at first, but you should be good". He was talking about the mountain climb that we were about to embark. Thanks for the warning, bud. A little more prepping on my part. Our hike starts off with about four to five miles over rocky desert terrain. THEN comes the mountain! The mountain was definitely a struggle with the flu symptoms still lingering from the week before. There I am taking a few breaks on the incline to catch my breath. About halfway up the mountain, my guide, Matt, asked if I wanted to just turn around and go back down to possibly check the ones spotted the evening before. My answer was, "Hell no! We are this far, I am not giving up, bud! This is once in a lifetime. It's my dream working on a reality. Let's do this!"

We finally make it to the top, still winded but hanging in there. Matt is glassing with his 15 x binoculars. It wasn't probably two- or three-minutes Matt spots one. Without any question, this one was a "go". He pointed it out and I also glassed quickly with my 10x powers. We saw the ram bedded two canyons over. Immediately Matt says, "let's go". Now we are hiking a canyon over to set up. Once we are at the spot, we soon set up for the shot. I am in a sitting position, and as comfortable as I can get. Matt then contacts Jake to make sure he's also on the ram. At this time the ram has no clue we are there as he is bedded down facing the morning sun. Decision time is here. Either I wait for him to stand, which could be a very long time, or I take him while he's bedded. Once I was comfortable in my sitting position, we both ranged him at 326 yards. I told Matt, "I'm ready, brother. Let's do this". He then hands me the round for the chamber. Matt then contacts Jake and tells him we are taking him and that it is a go. At that time, I was making sure the scope power was dialed in for the shot.

Boom! Goes the first shot. He hardly even moved.

We both thought that he didn't know what hit him or was it a miss? Matt says, "Put another in him!". This time he stands up, stretches and poops. Again, I reloaded and fired another shot. This time he gets a little swerve and swaying. Then he falls over and takes a dirt nap. Glassing him up at 16x power through my rifle scope, I can see the bullet wound assuring he was down. Then all the excitement! It was unreal. It took a second or two to realize what I had just done. I remember saying, "I got a ram! I got a ram!" Hugs and handshakes immediately followed. After the excitement tapers down, I call family. My mom, my girlfriend and sister that I had succeeded in my hunt. Then the tears flow, and the emotions get the best of me. There was no holding back. The years of waiting for this dream hunt had just become a reality. I couldn't wait to post my success on Social Media, "Ram Down!".

Now we are headed to the ram. But before, Matt notifies Jake and Clay to start heading to the ram. Jake had seen it all unfold spotting the old warrior.

So, onto the ram, as we still have to go down and up another canyon to get to the small basin where he is. One thing I remember my guide, Matt saying, on the way over to him, was, "Walt, this is your last climb!". I never thought of it like that, but hell yeah! What a sweet feeling when you busted butt all morning. Now I am almost to the ram and Matt was already near him. I asked if he would record me as I approached him. As I walked up to him, I am in awe, not believing what I am about to get my hands on. I throw my walking stick to the side, grab his horns, get on one knee, holding myself up by his horns, and thanking my Lord for putting me on this ram. I also said to the monarch of a ram, "Sorry it had to end, but this is hunting, and this is what hunters dream about". Also, my guide, Matt tells me that this is "big time, Walt!" After all this, I decide to name my ram, "El Grupo", meaning, "The Group". We did this from start to finish as a group and I felt it's only right to include the guys, Matt, Clay and Jake.

After the kill, Matt tells me this was one of their two target rams. The guides have been watching this ram since 2013 with footage, and then again two years ago in trail cam pictures of this old warrior. He hadn't been seen since. I assumed he was the granddaddy of them all in this part of the Mojave Desert called, "The Clipper Mountains".

The work getting him off the mountain begins. Thank God for the guides. The deboning begins and was done quickly; professionals all doing teamwork. Thumbs up for sure. We are now packed and heading off the mountain. Along the way, I am replaying it all back and rehashing every moment. Every step I took coming down the mountain were steps of feelings of gratitude, satisfaction and being proud of myself that it was accomplished.

Matt contacts Fish and Wildlife to see if they can validate my tag, measure and plug the ram. With our luck, they were working close to our location doing sheep work. The plan is for them to come by camp. They arrive later that evening and aged my ram at 17+ years old, with extra horn to add. She then tells me that this is the oldest ram they have ever recorded in California! The previous record was 16+ yrs. old, also guided by Dry Creek Outfitters. After this is all done, we are getting together to spend the last night in the desert, barbeque and reminiscing the hunt.

When we were all back at camp, I couldn't have painted a picture of that evening any better. The sunset was beautiful, desert orange, the sky was clear and calm, and once the night was here, along comes a full moon. The barrel, aka tub, had a fire while we enjoyed the last evening talking about the memories we had just made. A thought had crossed my mind as to how beautiful this had ended, and such a perfect sunset for

this old monarch of a ram, as if it were set up for him.

Wednesday morning was soon here, and the guides are packing it up and so am I. These guys are buds for life. The bond that only a hunter understands. These guys are incredible, and the short time we spent together, seemed like I have known them for years.

Well, it is good-bye and see you later to my guide brothers, Matt, Clay and Jake. As I leave this beautiful desert, driving away where I grew up as a kid in these surrounding mountains, I can't help to think that these mountains, the Clipper/Marble Mountains have a special meaning to me and hold a very warm spot in my heart. My dream hunt with memories that will last a lifetime.

Again, thank you to the group from Dry Creek Outfitters, and for all that supported me for my dream to come a reality.

OLD GUY SHEEP SHAPE

By Mike Torres

My next sheep hunt will see me creeping up on my 70th birthday, and as most of us have noticed, the mountains seem to be getting steeper every year. We all have an idea of what "sheep shape" is, but it gets more difficult to get in that kind of shape as we get older. Many hunters say they are too old to hunt sheep. What they are really saying is that they aren't physically capable of doing it. I don't buy that reasoning, you are never too old to hunt sheep as long as you get in the best condition you can.

Getting into the best physical condition you can will make your sheep hunts much more enjoyable and will greatly increase your odds of success. Being in "Sheep Shape" will allow you to tackle the extreme country sheep call home on what can be a grueling day after day basis. An old guide, who put me on my first Stone Ram in the Yukon, told me that "climbing a sheep mountain is like eating an elephant, you can do it, just one bite at a time". While most of us will never be in the kind of shape we were in 30-40 years ago, a simple daily workout routine will really surprise both you and your young guide, who climbs mountains like a goat.

In trying to protect my knees from further damage I no longer run. Instead of running I hike the hills around home every morning with a backpack full of water jugs, increasing the weight as I become accustomed to it. Every afternoon I hit the local gym and focus on low impact high cardio workouts on stair masters and elliptical machines. When the snow melts from the mountains in Northern California, I drive up to Lassen Nation Park near my home in Redding. I try to hike up Brokeoff Mountain in Lassen NP on a weekly basis. When my wife Lee asks me why I hike this mountain so often, I tell her that this mountain is my "Sheep Barometer", in that as long as I can hike up 8500 feet of rock I know I can still make it up any sheep mountain, and I'm going to do so as long as I can. Mountain sheep live under wild skies in the most remote and beautiful country there is, get in better shape and get after them. As James Brown once sang "Get on up!"



SPORTSMEN CALL ON PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES; DELIVER WILDLIFE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY, VOLUME VI

from Wild Sheep Foundation

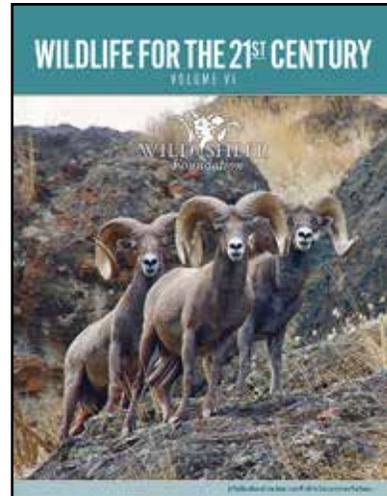
Since 2001, the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP) has delivered a comprehensive transition document to each presidential campaign vying for election. AWCP was formed in 2000. It is now a consortium of 50 organizations representing the interests of America's millions of hunter-conservationists, professional wildlife and natural resource managers, outdoor recreation users, conservation educators, and wildlife scientists. The Wild Sheep Foundation is one of the group's founding members.

Wildlife for the 21st Century - Volume VI (W21) presents the challenges and recommendations sportsmen urge the new administration and Congress to address. These are the pressing issues facing wildlife conservation and our sporting heritage. Each recommendation is based on sound science and builds on the historical achievements of hunter-conservationists in making this country's wildlife resources as healthy and vibrant as possible, for all citizens.

"The powerful unity behind the W21 agenda is the exact reason AWCP was formed," said Gray N. Thornton, president and CEO of the Wild Sheep Foundation. "Bringing to light conservation challenges affecting wildlife, habitats, and sportsmen, coming up with smart solutions and recommendations, and then delivering these to our policy-makers in one loud voice is what AWCP is all about. We've done the work. Now its up to the incoming administration and Congress."

Volume VI Recommendations include:

- Funding for Conservation: Secure permanent and dedicated conservation funding from public and private sources
- Federal Land Access: Enhance access for hunters and outdoor recreationists
- Big Game Migrations: Require collaboration on big game migration corridors and habitats
- Energy Development: Integrate industry, state, and federal wildlife goals early in energy planning
- Private Land Conservation: Incentivize private landowners to conserve wildlife and habitat and provide access for hunting



- Active Management of Federal Lands: Increase active management of federal lands and reduce litigation through collaboration
- Species Conservation: Achieve greater results from an improved Endangered Species Act (ESA) program
- Big Game Diseases: Support and assist states in addressing Chronic Wasting Disease and wild sheep pneumonia
- Climate Change: Focus climate policy on habitat conservation and restoration
- Hunting Heritage and the Future: Require collaboration for wildlife conservation, hunting, and recreational shooting on federal lands

"These are all current, high-level issues, with solid recommendations," Thornton explained. "We're particularly pleased to see diseases plaguing our wild sheep, deer, and elk getting much-needed attention. We look forward to working with the new administration and Congress over the next four years to make these recommendations work for our wildlife and people."

The complete Volume is available on the WSF website (<http://www.wildsheepfoundation.org>).

To learn more about AWCP visit <http://www.wildlife-partners.org/>.

2022 STONE SHEEP HUNT Special Drawing



ONLY 600 TICKETS AVAILABLE

\$100 PER TICKET

CA WSF Board Member
Shawn Wood with Stone
Sheep at Scoop Lake Outfitters



Scoop Lake Outfitters

Hunt Information

14 day 1x1 hunt with Scoop Lake Outfitters

Dates: August 1 - August 14, 2022

Location: central British Columbia, Canada

This is a full hunt including trophy fee, field prep, accommodations in tent or cabin, and air charter. Transportation during the hunt is mostly by horseback. Wolf may be added at no fee. Additional species including moose, goat, bear, and caribou may be added at regular fees. You will be responsible for license, tags, and Hunting Preservation Fund (approximately US\$1300) and gratuities.

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www.cawsf.org/store

Orders must be received by April 10, 2021. Drawing held April 24, 2021.

ANNIVERSARY RAM

*by Richard Hooper
CA WSF Life Member*

I would like to start by thanking the California Wild Sheep Foundation, California Fish and Wildlife, all the volunteers and organizations that have worked so hard to restore the desert big horn sheep in California. The opportunity that I received would not have happened without their hard work and dedication for that, and I thank you all.

My story starts like most hunters with the day draw results are posted. I received a notice on my phone that draw result where out. I arrived home to check results. I looked in disbelief that it said I was successful in my draw. I ran around the house like a crazy man and jumping up and down like a hit dog. My wife truly thought I lost it. Did mention, I told my wife it was ok to book our 30th wedding anniversary for dates out of country for what would be the opening weekend of big horn sheep season. I told my wife no worries I will never get that tag!

I have hunted and self-guided most of my life around western United States for many species with great success and tag soups along the way. The White Mountain's unit is one of the hardest desert big horn sheep hunts in California with minimal vehicle access and sheep to be found as high as the White Mountains peak at 14,252 feet. I knew this once in a life time opportunity required the best guide I could find. The news spread quickly of my luck and with that came many great suggestions for guides but one was mentioned to many times to ignore, Jake Franklin with Kika Guide and Outfitter Services. I contacted Jake over a few weeks and felt confident that he was the best choice. Jake had an excitement in his voice when he talked about rams and ram country. Once hired, Jake's large team did an amazing job of finding rams and sending occasional pictures of rams that dreams are made of. I discussed my prearranged anniversary plans and my worries about missing opening weekend and Jake assured me that there are many good rams in this unit to hunt when I return. Best keep the peace and have 31st anniversary.

My good friend, Chuck Vreeland of Utah, joined me on the hunt and he met me at the bottom of a trail head and we were greeted by Jake and a team member who quickly saddled up the horses for the first ride to a 10,000 foot base camp. The ride at night was incredible, we were above tree line and there was no light pollution and plenty of stars.

In the morning, we awoke to a quick coffee, breakfast and saddled up for a ride to 12,500 feet. Chuck and I looked in amazement at the country



Richard Hooper, Cady Mountain ram 2020

we were hunting and the incredible sunrise. This experience I shared with my hunting buddy and the Kika team will be hard to beat. We arrived at a large bowl at the top of the mountain and settled in to start glassing for the morning. The guides had seen a nice ram in this area and we decided to start the hunt looking for him. As luck would have it, we located the ram and moved in to get a shot. It was a steep downhill shot at 340 yards with a strong wind. Welcome to big horn sheep hunting! We stacked backpacks to gain the required height to clear the rocks. I ready myself for the shot with Jake calling out the range until it was show time. Feeling this was one of the most important shots of my life, the pressure was on. I squeezed the trigger and the guides said you missed! The ram ran a short distance and stopped. Trying keep cool with Jake getting me right back on target, I prepared for the second shot and let it go. I chambered a round and got back on target to see that he was going down. I could hear guides all around the bowl sounding off like a pack of coyotes. It is a moment that is indescribable. We all worked our way down to the ram, and all my mind was thinking of was the desert big horn sheep story, and recovery that gave me this opportunity. The countless hours of work from state, federal, volunteer, organizations and hunters paying for its recovery. I walked up to the ram and it was big, I was one happy hunter. We spent time for a photo shoot and Chuck and I learned from the crew about the ram as it was prepared to be backed to the horses. We hiked out of the bowl to the horses and road back to the 10,000 foot base camp. Crew

members started arriving back to camp after breaking down individual spikes camps around the mountain to join in on the celebration. That night Jake cooked the tenderloins on a piece of flat rock over a backpack stove with everyone talking about the days hunt. Desert bighorn sheep tenderloins on a slat rock, talk about a dream come true. The ram scored SCI record book at 170 2/8. I would like thank Jake Franklin with Kika Guide and Outfitter Services and his crew for working so hard setting up camps all over the mountain and the preseason scouting. A great outfitter and crew.



Richard Hooper and the Kika Worldwide team

CALIFORNIA WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

by Donald C. Martin

In the wake of the 2020 Board of Directors election, there are no changes to current committee chairmen seats. The committee chairs are as follows:

Banquet/Fundraising Committee

Co-Chairman: Ken Crother, ken.crother@goldenwestpackaging.com

Co-Chairman: Donald C. Martin, don-martin@earthlink.net

Membership Committee

Chairman: Shawn Wood, shawnwood83@gmail.com

GALAD & Water Projects Committee

Chairman: Mike Borel, mike.borel@contextnet.com

Governmental Affairs & Projects Beyond Water Committee

Chairman: Don Priest, donpriest@primanagers.com

Youth Outreach Committee

Chairman: Glen Pyne, pawsnclaws@sbcglobal.net

Communications Committee

Co-Chairman: Mike Borel, mike.borel@contextnet.com

Beverly Valdez, forthesheep@gmail.com

It is not necessary to be on the Board of the Directors to be a member of a committee. If you wish to volunteer, it would be much appreciated. Please feel free to reach out to Committee Chairs or email forthesheep@gmail.com and suggest you'd like to become more involved. Help us "Putting and Keeping Sheep on the Mountains" here in California. Thank you.

A TALE OF TWO GOATS

by Zack Walton

CA WSF Board Member, Distinguished Life Member

Let me preface this with bowhunting is not always fun, not always easy and does not always go as planned. Why do we do it? It's easy to explain to everyone that bowhunts, but to those that have no interest in bowhunting, or don't understand it, it is much more difficult. "You do what on your vacations?" "You enjoy being in the middle of nowhere, all alone, for several days?" "That mountain looks big. Did you climb all the way up there?" "And you spent how much money to do it?" These are all questions I have heard countless times over the years. This story will be easy to tell to other bowhunters, but not so easy for non-bowhunters to understand. The good, the bad and the ugly of these two adventures left me with so many emotions, that it will be difficult to express them all. But here is my attempt...

For several years I planned my hunting seasons around the tags I "should" draw for the year. Needless to say, each year I was left planning last-second hunts because no state agency was kind enough to send me a premium tag. I no longer do that. Now, I plan at least a couple hunts that I can lock into my fall schedule, so I no longer have to scramble. A few years ago, I was looking forward to a September trip to northern British Columbia for mountain goat and Canada moose. Because of the hunt in Canada, I didn't put in for many of the draw hunts I normally would. However, I took a chance on one of Nevada's top antelope units and for the first time in my life, I drew a tag that I was not guaranteed. So, July meant scouting Northern Nevada for speed goats.

After talking to several friends who had hunted the unit, I spent several days with Dad looking over as much of the area as possible. We found a couple areas that had good concentrations of antelope and expecting hot, dry weather, we placed a couple ground blinds. We headed back over a couple days before the August 1 opener and spent more time looking for a large 'lope.

It was going to be nice to have some company in the middle-of-nowhere Nevada, so I was thankful Dad could join me. Plus, we could split up and scout different areas at the same time. Overall, we found a lot of bucks, but I never found a giant to hunt. Because of that, I stuck with the first scouted areas



Zack Walton On the Mountain

where we knew of several bucks and lots of antelope.

Day after day, I put in my time in the ground blind. I figured with enough time, a quality buck would stumble into the waterhole. Over the first few days, I saw lots of antelope and multiple bucks each sit. Some bucks were tempting, but I knew the unit had great potential and I decided to be patient.

I spent as many as 15 hours in the ground blind a day, but not every day. A couple afternoons, thunderstorms moved in and when rain started falling I headed out. I also tried to spot and stalk antelope a couple evenings, but never found antelope in areas that were conducive to bowhunting. So, each morning I would settle into the ground blind and make myself comfortable. Most days I had a decent amount of action—at least enough to keep me from going too crazy.

I hunted nine straight days without finding the right buck to release an arrow on and had to head back home to work. Even though I never thought I would spend that long in the unit without shooting a nice antelope, I was already making plans to head back in a week and trying to figure ways to convince my business partners, and my wife, that my coming back to fill my antelope tag would benefit everyone.

After finishing my work a few days later, I loaded my truck and made the seven-hour drive back to hunt. Since Dad was headed to a different state for another bowhunt, I made this trip alone and knew things would not be as comfortable this time around. I went

from staying in a 32-foot trailer, riding around in a Razor and eating nice meals every day, to a two-man tent, my old SUV and lots of sandwiches! Oh well, I would be hunting again.

I had left a trailcam up during my absence and hoped to have a good idea of what bucks would be around before I started hunting. I had photos of several bucks, including one nice buck with great prongs. However, I had only one pic of him, so I didn't plan on waiting another week for him. I had decided to be less picky on this trip due to lack of days left in the season and the fact that I was not really supposed to be away right then.

Before I left, my business partner said, "I bet you get over there and shoot one the first morning." Although I appreciated his confidence, I really think that he just wanted me to notch my tag and get back to work! One could hope though...

After arriving in the middle of the night, making my camp and getting a couple hours sleep, I was back in the ground blind before first light. As much as things don't work out how you plan them while bowhunting, sometimes they do. Two hours after sunrise, I looked at the rocky ridge a couple hundred yards from the blind and saw a strange shape on the skyline. Through the binos, I could see the head and prongs of a nice antelope poking above the bush. He stood there for more than 30 minutes, moving slightly and surveying the area surrounding the waterhole below him. I had plenty of time to decide I would try to arrow this buck if he came in. In the flat below the antelope, a mule deer doe started her way toward the waterhole. Apparently the buck decided he had the first reservation and practically ran down the small rise toward me. He cut off the doe, who stood there, dumbfounded, and he made the following 50 yards without hesitation and dropped his head to drink.

I quickly came to full draw from behind the corner of the blind and settled the 30-yard pin on the buck's chest. Before I realized what happened, the arrow



zipped through the buck and he jumped only 20 yards before extending all four legs to support his failing muscles. He was down in only a few seconds, as the arrow had pierced his heart.

This was my first antelope and I was pleasantly surprised at how pretty they are up close. I took a while to reflect on my time spent trying to get to this moment. The scouting, the first trip to hunt when Dad had accompanied me, and now, alone on my second trip, the pursuit was time consuming. I had spent 101 hours in a ground blind over 10 days and in no way did any of that time seem wasted to me.

The day was starting to warm, so I didn't waste much time while cleaning the buck. I loaded the meat in a cooler, packed up my freshly arranged camp and headed home. I pulled into my driveway 28 hours after leaving and I had spent 14 hours on the road. After all the time I had put into the first hunt, it seemed ironic it took so little time to notch my tag on the second trip. But who am I to complain!

Round two for goats required a little more travel...First step, getting to Vancouver. Then on to Whitehorse, Yukon.

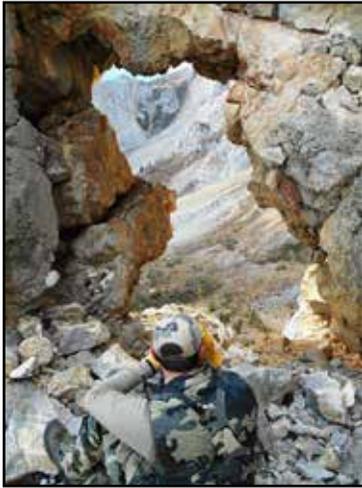
The following day, we made the 4-and-a-half hour drive to Watson Lake. The winds were howling all afternoon and evening with gusts up to 60 MPH. We were going to have to stay in Watson Lake that night and hope for a break in the weather the following morning.

I woke early the next morning and was excited to see the weather had vastly improved. The 45-minute flight into base camp was like every other bush flight I have had—Amazing! From a few thousand feet up, the forest looked like a dark green cake frosted with yellow icing. Steep, rugged mountains jutted towards the clouds. Many of those nasty peaks were home to stone sheep, but I wouldn't be hiking up those. I would be looking for lower, although more brutal mountains that would hold mountain goat. It was still cool to fly over mountains that held grey sheep!

The base camp was extensive. The setup they had so far from civilization was excellent. There were more than a dozen cabins, kitchen, dining area, stables, gardens and everything necessary to maintain a huge crew for months. The camp ran on solar, wind and generator and had running water. It was nicer than the "hotel" I had to stay in the night before in Watson Lake. As excited as I was to get out to spike camp to start hunting, I was kind of sad not to stay around camp for a while.

Now the hunt: Since I had flown into camp a day later than planned—and had to wait six hours before hunting—we decided to go scouting for the rest of the afternoon from the boat. This large rock formation only a couple miles from camp proved to be a frequent spot to glass for us as there were goats living on every

side of it. And yes, the rocks were as vertical as they looked.



The first day we saw several goats, as we covered most of the lake in search of white dots on the peaks. The weather was ever changing that day and clouds and fog moved through the mountains, bringing with them intermittent rain storms. We spotted a couple billies, and moved part way up the mountain before being pelted by a deluge of rain. After soaking ourselves on the mountain until sunset, we made it back to camp through a tangled mess of alders and assorted brush before reaching camp after dark. I was glad for a warm meal and fire to dry my cold, wet body.

For the first several days, we saw between 15-20 goats each day. Many were nannies and kids, but we saw a few nice billies per day. I think we were secretly hoping to find an “easy” goat, but none were available. We covered a lot of ground that day but didn’t find a billy in a good spot to stalk. The best goat we could find was living way off around a cave. We saw him everyday and watched him stay in the same spot most of the day. We decided to take a closer look in the morning about a possible route to him.

Weather looked good on the following morning and we went straight to the shoreline across from the big rock formation. It took about two seconds to find cave goat and surprise; he was in the same spot. We glassed for a while and found several nannies and kids crawling over the front of the rock face. We also picked up a lone billy bedded up the canyon to the right of the rocks. With two good billies spotted in the same general direction, we decided to make a play. We closely looked at the possible approaches to cave goat and the other billy. Since it was closer to the bedded billy to the right, we would try him first and use cave goat as a backup stalk. We started our way up the mountain through the alders and blow-down trees and a few hours later we emerged on the rock face.

After reaching the rocks, we peeked around to try and locate the first billy and found a nanny and kid bedded right in the middle of our approach route to the billy. Having no way to skirt around them and get down to the first billy, we decided to abort and head for plan No. 2—cave goat. From the lake shore, we had a good plan to get close to the goat. We had looked at the approach for several days and had decided on what we thought would be a long, but doable, route. After reaching the top of the rock face, we would be able to skirt along around the bottom of the chimney rocks, slide down to the entry point of the goat trail and follow that up into his rocky fortress. Since he bedded against the giant chimney rocks, we had no choice but to approach from the bottom. On the way up, things started looking more scary and less easy to traverse—that never happens, right?!?

We had to keep choosing different routes, leading us farther from the cave, in hopes that we would find a better approach. Never let reality get in the way of a good plan... We crossed several rock slides, some with giant rocks, some with tiny rocks—each more difficult to cross than the previous. At one point, we were stuck. The rocks were sliding all around us and the mountain seemed to be moving. We couldn’t keep going forward, couldn’t backtrack and heading down would be a ride down a rocky, treacherous slip-and-slide that we did not want to experience. So straight up was our only option. It took a long while to get out of the sketchy slide and luckily we found a small goat trail. We made the rest of the climb and finally touched boots to solid ground. We were a 100 yards below the goat and it had been nearly six hours since we had seen him. Climbing up the chute towards the goat, we were not very optimistic that he would still be at the mouth of the cave. At 50 yards, we peeked out from behind a rock and saw a white pack of hair. He was still there!

I dropped back and looped higher on the cliffs to sneak closer. The guide stayed behind and I waited for wind gusts to creep closer along the goat trail. I poked my head out to see the goat still bedded directly above me. I ranged the goat’s back at 26 yards and settled behind a rock pile. Since I could only see back, head and horns, I would have to wait for the goat to stand. Minutes later, I saw white fur start to move. The billy was standing up. I came to full draw and watched as the goat reached his feet. Now, I have heard stories about how some mountain goats will questioningly look at hunters for enough time to allow a shot after making eye contact. Not cave goat! I watched his eyes bulge and nearly pop out of his skull like an over-inflated birthday balloon. His head snapped back in a swift motion and his expression was obvious, “What the hell are you doing here?”

I thought the only way out was to the left, which would allow me a shot opportunity if he stopped at any point in the next 50 yards. I was wrong. Cave goat immediately bolted after eye contact and ducked behind the rock face and disappeared. I crept closer

and saw him scrambling over the top of an 85-foot, sheer vertical cliff that was behind him. Those animals amazed me on where they could go. By the time I got around the chimney rocks, he was 80 yards away and looking at me. From a distance, mountain goats reminded me of little, white bears. But from up close, they reminded me more of a dog. I may have been reading too much into it, but I swear the goats had very expressive faces. And cave goat's initial reaction of shock, had morphed into disdain at someone forcing him to evacuate his long-time home. He slowly strutted around the face of the mountain and I would not see him again for five days.

It was a long trip back to the camp that night, especially after getting so close to a goat we thought would not be possible to shoot with a bow. But, tomorrow was another opportunity and what is the point of being a bowhunter if you are not optimistic?!?!

The next morning we found a different billy and watched him for a long time before he bedded near the top of a peak that overlooked a big cliff. It looked like we could work our way up a creek bottom, around the back of the peak and drop down on top of the bedded goat. This would be a more straight-forward stalk than the previous day—and shorter—we hoped. We started up the mountain and less than three hours later we were perched 50 yards above our landmark tree, below which the billy was bedded. I eased down the hill another 20 yards by myself and located the goat's ear through the boughs of the pine. I nocked an arrow and settled in to wait for the billy to stand. Not much time passed before the goat stood from his bed and turned around. I still didn't have a shot through the tree and waited for the billy to make a decision. When he took a couple steps from behind the tree, I was already at full draw. I settled my 30-yard pin tight behind the shoulder and leaned downhill to accommodate the slope. The arrow sizzled through the air and I watched the goat crow-hop as the arrow buried to the fletching in his shoulder. My immediate thought was "heart shot."

The guide scrambled down the hill and we watched the billy cross a rock slide below us. Both sides were covered with red-stained hair and the goat struggled to climb across the rocks. We waited for an hour before taking up the blood trail. I had heard how tough mountain goats are and we didn't want to make a mistake.

We followed the blood trail until it reached the rock bluffs. There was not a good way to follow down the bluffs, so we went back down the mountain and glassed from below until we found the goat bedded, but alive. We devised another approach plan, but because of the situation, the guide and I decided to split up. He would go up the left side and try to watch for escape routes while I went right and tried to sneak in on the goat for another shot. If I could arrow him again, I would yell out so the guide knew. I started the

climb and tried to move quickly. When I reached the same level as the bedded goat, I started working back towards him through some very sketchy terrain that I'm sure neither my wife, nor my life insurance agent, would be happy to hear about. I did finally reach my landmark rock pile and when I leaned around it I could see white. I ranged his rump at 25 yards and it would be very steep downhill. He was still bedded and quartering toward me, but I didn't feel I could wait for a better opportunity. I wanted this over. I drew and concentrated hard on a spot just behind his shoulder. The bow about jumped out of my hands down the slope on the recoil but I heard the arrow "chunk" as it struck my aiming point and traveled the length of goat before exiting the far hip.

I was only 40 yards from the billy, but his head and hump were all that was visible. The goat was not moving anywhere and I knew it was only a matter of minutes. I was afraid to make too much noise or move closer and forgot I wasn't the only person on the mountain. I was abruptly reminded I was not alone by the sharp, deafening sound that is every bowhunter's worst nightmare. "BOOM."

Although my guide had not heard my initial yell about shooting the goat again, he heard my long, expressive, obscenity-lace screams this time. It took me a while to get down to the goat through the rock slides, but it wasn't long enough. I was still very upset when I got down there and following the extensive blood trail from after my second arrow to where he had again bedded did not help me. However, I was never upset at my guide. Only myself. Another 30 minutes passed before I began to calm. There was work to be done and it was foolish to be upset on the mountain. I was surrounded by beautiful scenery, sitting next to an amazing animal that I had waited my entire life to be near and over the past week I had been on one of the great adventures of my life.

I have had some time to reflect now and have come to this realization: I should have made a better shot on



the first arrow (it passed through both shoulders and missed just above and in front of the heart, yet behind the trachea/aorta). An inch or two in any direction and it would not have been an issue. I should have yelled louder to express I had a lethal arrow in the



goat on the second stalk. The guide was only reacting on the information he had and did exactly what he felt was necessary. And in the end, the only thing I cannot do is enter the goat in Pope & Young, which as a long-time supporter, pains me deeply. I still made the climbs, still made the stalks and still put a lethal arrow into a great goat. Things didn't end exactly how I had hoped, but mountain bowhunting does not always go as planned. It would be a huge mistake to feel as though this experience was a complete failure and carry that around with me for the rest of my life. That would be a waste of time, effort and money to dismiss this experience and count it as letdown. I can always keep a little disappointment with me for my mistakes, so that I will make sure not to make them again, but I will not let myself dwell on it for the next 50 years. Bowhunting is not always fun, not always easy and does not always go as planned. Why do we do it? Because there is nothing else I would rather do.

Words of Wisdom about A Glass of Wine

To my friends who enjoy a glass of wine and those who don't but are always seen with a bottle of water in their hand.

As Ben Franklin said, "In wine there is wisdom, in beer there is freedom, in water there is bacteria."

In a number of carefully controlled trials, scientists have demonstrated that if we drink 1 liter of water each day, at the end of the year we would have absorbed more than 1 kilo of Escherichia coli, (E. Coli) - bacteria found in feces.

In other words, we are consuming 1 kilo of poop annually.

However, we do NOT run that risk when drinking wine & beer (or rum, whiskey or other liquor), because alcohol has to go through a purification process of filtering and fermenting – and alcohol is a disinfectant.

Remember:

Water = Poop,

Wine = Health

Therefore, it's better to drink wine and talk stupid, than to drink water and be full of Shit!



**Mountain Lion feasting on a
Sierra Nevada ram**

Bad Kitty!

2020 FUNDRAISER RECAP

by Donald C Martin
CA WSF Board Member, Distinguished Life Member

Covid-19 has pretty much sucked all the fun out of the 2020 Wild Sheep Foundation State Chapter dinner season. Like so many other chapters, our event was postponed and then subsequently canceled as our venue could not accommodate our members and still meet the State mandated health and social distancing requirements.

On June 27, we concluded a 7 day online auction of the remaining items that we had held in reserve and had a profitable online auction using Facebook as our primary platform. Going forward, we intend to use our "Give a Lamb a Drink" page on Facebook as a social media resource to help generate revenue for wildlife. That page is located at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GALAD>.

Due to the cancellation of our June 27th live event, we were faced with a dilemma on how to award the Life Member Only random drawing for a 10 day 1x1 Dall sheep hunt with Ultima Thule Outfitters. The Life Member Only random drawing usually requires attendance to the live event. After much deliberation among the fundraising committee and our CA WSF Board of Directors, it was decided that we would allow Life Members to donate the equivalent of their dinner ticket, \$100, to be entered into a chance to win the Dall sheep hunt. This inspired a few individuals to join as new life members and many existing life members to upgrade to Distinguished Life member. As a result, we raised a whopping \$34,500 for our long term Life Member fund that will ensure the future of CA Wild Sheep Foundation. On June 27th, I live-streamed the drawing of the winner on our Facebook page using a random number generator courtesy of random.org and the lucky winner was Distinguished Life member Mason Rogers, a new member. Congratulations Mason and thank you for supporting CA WSF. In total, our combined efforts for our virtual fundraiser and Stone Sheep random drawing in May, our social media live auction in June, and our life member drawing, CA WSF was able to net approximately \$71,500 for our 2020 fundraising efforts. I would like to personally extend my thanks and congratulations to our entire Board of Directors, Beverly Valdez, our volunteers, and all of our members. Thank you.

It's never too early to start planning to attend our 2021 event on April 24th at the Doubletree by Hilton in Sacramento. Save the date and plan to attend. Tickets for our 2021 Grand Prize random drawing are



Don Martin sans his glorious mane!

already available for sale. We will be awarding one lucky winner a 14 day 1x1 hunt for Stone Sheep with Scoop Lake Outfitters of British Columbia. We thank Darwin and Wendy Cary for providing us with this opportunity and an additional special thanks to CA WSF Director Shawn Wood for soliciting this hunt. Tickets are available now at: cawsf.org/store.html You do not need to be present to win.

In addition, we will be awarding by random drawing an up to 10 day 1x1 Dall sheep hunt with Ultima Thule Outfitters to a lucky youth life member, life member, or distinguished life member that **MUST BE IN THE ROOM TO WIN IT**. No additional payment required. Youth and adult life members will receive one chance each with their dinner ticket and distinguished life members will receive 3 chances. Consider upgrading to life member or distinguished life member today, and you must attend to win it, so make your plans now to attend!

We have all of our 2020 silent auction items left over, so there will be plenty of quality items in both our live and silent auctions in 2021 as well as our traditional lineup of quality firearms and optics in our general and progressive raffles.

I regret we couldn't all get together this year, but we'll throw an even better party next year and I look forward to seeing all of you there. Make plans now to attend and I will see you next April!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: MAGGI KOUFFELD

Hello everyone! I'm sure that when you were considering who you would vote for on the coveted 2020-2022 Directors Ballot you might have thought to yourself; who is this lady? I wanted to take this chance to introduce myself and maybe break the ice a bit.

First, I would like to express my humble appreciation for being considered for the board. To serve with group of like-minded, driven individuals; working to preserve and educate the value and benefits of rational, ethical, ecological and sustainable hunting would be a true honor.

I was fortunate to have been raised in a family that was passionate about the outdoors and wildlife conservation. Born and raised in Northwestern California, some of my earliest and fondest memories come from in the field. My father is an avid and accomplished hunter who fostered the love of hunting in both my sister and me at a young age. My mother, also supportive of this self-sustainable lifestyle, was instrumental in teaching us about nature, plant identification, horsemanship, game processing and preserving harvest both from in the field and garden. My steadfast sister Meadow has also been instrumental in nurturing a well-rounded love for the outdoors and desire to explore the world. She is my role model, hunting partner, and best friend. From our first dove hunt to the harvest of my first black-tailed deer she has always been there inspiring me. She has dedicated her life to conservation of wildlife and sporting traditions in every way. She often acts as the instigator and fierce supporter of our hunting endeavors. Together we have convinced ourselves to travel to faraway lands such as Kyrgyzstan for Mid-Asian Ibex, South Africa for plains game and Hungary for Roe deer.

With this strong foundation from my family, I have since spent my life enjoying the outdoors and hunting in Northern California and beyond. I have



been blessed with taking almost all the big game species of California, except for pronghorn and sheep. The B Zone blacktails being the most prominent in my hunting career due to the location of the small town of Igo where I was raised. I enjoy the challenge of hunting with diverse methods; including archery, muzzleloader, shotgun and rifle. I also partake in long distance shooting, horseback riding/hunting, backpack hunting, ranching and traveling. In addition, I am a 3rd generation firefighter and am passionate about my job and helping others. I am currently a Fire Captain with Cal Fire based in Redding, California.

Some of my most cherished moments have been mentoring youth and people new to hunting. I believe it is imperative that we ensure the future of hunting by recruiting, retaining and reactivating hunters and anglers (R3). As mentioned in my candidate biography from the board, I have been involved with the NWTJ Jakes program as a youth mentor and hunt leader for the past 5 years. I believe programs like JAKES and wildlife conservation organizations such as the California Wild Sheep Foundation, National Wild Sheep foundation and California Deer Foundation (to name a few) are crucial. Now that I have become more established in my career I can now become more involved in conservation organizations.

In summary I am happy to have the opportunity to reach out and introduce myself, I may not know you personally but you are my people! Although, you might remember me as the girl who left her debit card at the bar at the 2019 CA WSF Dinner. I thought I had won something when they announced my name! We still laugh about that! I am excited to be a member of this foundation and hope in the future, with your help, I will have the honor to represent our organization as an active board of director member.



THE WOW FACTOR

By Kai Jahnsen

Jim Doering is an 80-year-old with a rebuilt hip, one rebuilt knee, 5 titanium discs in his back, along with other health issues. Even with all that, he's a huntin' stud. During the warm months every chance he gets he's out on the water, in his 1970 tri-hull boat that he rigged up with a 4-foot stand on the bow, shooting carp with his bow and arrow. He is one of those guys that is the definition of the term "Die Hard".

Jim has been putting in for the California Desert Big Horn Sheep hunt since the drawing started in the early 80s. When the 2019/2020 application season began, Jim put in for the drawing just like every year. This time he got it! Jim called me up and told me that he had been drawn. It was one of those "bucket list" things. He told me that he had booked his hunt with Dry Creek Outfitters, and that he was able to take ONE person along on the hunt with him for free. Jim asked if I wanted to go with him to be that person. I was SO EXCITED to be able to share this "once in a lifetime" hunt with him.

The day came to head to Primm, Nevada, where we would be staying for a possible nine days in hopes of Jim finding and bagging a BIG RAM. I worked the graveyard shift the night prior and after I got off, I headed over to Jim's house at 0400 hrs. Jim drove the entire way, a nine-hour drive.

Once at our destination, Cliff StMartin met up with us, got us settled in and told us we'd be eating breakfast at 0500 hrs. Cliff and his crew: Kirk, Jason and Jason's father, Doyle, were AWESOME! The crew was very easy to get along with and just good ol' down-to-earth guys, full of hunting stories and experience.

It was January 15th, 2020, the first day of hunting and we had just finished our breakfast and were heading out. Cliff sent his guys in all different areas in hopes someone would spot a nice Ram for Jim. Jim and I hopped in the truck with Cliff and we were off. It was approx. 28 degrees outside, and the wind was coming from the S/E. We checked out a few areas but spotted nothing. Cliff wanted to check out this one area where he had previously seen sheep. Once at the spot, we all got out and started glassing the mountains. Within approx. 4 min. Cliff spotted some sheep. We went to where Cliff was, and he pointed out to us where they were on the mountain side. He said that they were feeding on a barrel cactus. He told us



Jim Doering, 80 years young and his Clark/Kingston desert bighorn 2020 from 250 yards, the largest taken this last season"

there were two Rams and one looked good. Jim and I located them and saw the one he was talking about. I liked what I saw. Jim looked through Cliff's spotting scope at the bigger ram, I asked Jim what he thought, and he looked at me and said, "I'm just not seeing The WOW factor". Cliff and I just laughed. Cliff told Jim he thought it was one of the nicest Rams he had seen this season. The more Jim looked at it the more he liked it. Cliff said he knew it was the first day of the hunt but thought that we should take a closer look at the Ram before Jim made his final decision.

The Rams were approximately 1500 yards from where we were. There was a saddle just to the west of the Rams. If we could make it there, Cliff calculated that we would be within 300 yds. Cliff called his guys and they came over to where we were to keep an eye on the Rams. Meanwhile, Cliff, Jim, and I made our way up to the saddle.

We drove around the west side of the mountain and parked. It looked like a pretty steep hike to the top, but we would go at Jim's pace. I carried Jim's rifle for him so all he had to do is get himself up to the saddle. As soon as I stepped out of the truck, I glassed the mountain side that we were going to hike up to. We were going to make sure that there weren't any sheep or other animals that might spook the rams we had been watching on the other side. I spotted a lone Ewe. I told Cliff and he spotted it as well. He said she looked like she was getting ready to give birth and probably would not go to where the other sheep were. She had laid down and we decided to make our



hike up the mountain and keep our distance from her. She stayed put. Once at the top in the saddle, the wind

was perfect. Cliff ranged the Ram and he was only 250 yards out and he was bedded. Jim was shooting a .270 cal, it was a money shot. Cliff positioned his pack on some rocks for Jim to shoot from. Once Jim saw the Ram through the scope there was no question, he turned and looked at me with a huge smile and said, "I'm going to shoot him". As Cliff was getting the camera set up on the tripod Jim got behind his scope, then BOOM!! Cliff looked at me and then looked through his spotting scope at the Ram. He saw the Ram stand up with blood pouring out of him and it laid back down. Jim had just bagged himself a trophy. The closer we got to the Ram the bigger he was. Cliff recorded Jim walking up on his Ram and his reaction was epic. Jim couldn't contain his excitement when he picked up the massive horns of his Ram. It was like a kid on Christmas morning. Cliff then called the guys up and Kirk, Jason and Doyle hiked up to where we were and all four of them processed the Ram with quickness.

The Ram scored 180 1/8" gross which made it the largest Ram taken this year in California. I was so very honored to be a part of the whole hunt and thankful to Jim for inviting me. A HUGE thanks to Dry Creek Outfitters, Cliff, Kirk, Jason and Doyle for showing us an epic time.

CALIFORNIA WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION ELECTION 2020 RESULTS

Thanks to all members participating in the Board elections in June. A special thank you to the Board members who have dedicated so much time and energy over the past year to our goal of PUTTING AND KEEPING SHEEP ON THE MOUNTAINS, especially outgoing Board member Dwight Ortmann. Dwight will remain involved and stays on the fundraising committee. And a big thank you to Maggi Kouffeld and Andy Moeckel for standing for election this year, and we look forward to seeing you there again in the future.

Board Officers for 2020-2021 are:

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Secretary:
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E-SCOUTING WITH ONX MAPS

by Beverly Valdez
CA WSF Member

In May 2019 I received the notice -- I had been drawn for one of two out-of-state bison hunts in the Utah Book Cliffs range. I was so excited! I had already had an extraordinary hunt for Alaska bison in 2017 thanks to a CA WSF and Ultima Thule Outfitters random drawing so I knew it was going to provide a lot of good eating and a good time. John Ware (Distinguished Life Member and my favorite hunting partner) and I planned a DIY hunt for this bison.

I started wondering how I could do some pre-scouting. Should we hire someone to do that? Make a couple of trips to Utah in a hurry amid everything else we had already planned? Neither option worked so I started using my computer the way I normally do for trips -- mapping out every detail I could find.

I have been using onX Maps since they first came out and donated an annual membership to CA WSF for a fundraiser. It's on my phone, my iPad, and my computer. And I use it the way most people do -- to see if I'm on private land or to find out who owns the land so I can contact them to see about hunting.. I also map all of my hunts, hikes, and sometimes road trips, marking where I see anything, where my 'tracks' are. But this time I used it to plan where I "might" see bison and might make camp.

Figure 1 shows my first map with just the basics: how to get in/out of the hunting area, a few markers that I had read about and general layout. Note the different markers for locations -- camping, cabin, directions for ATV, etc. There is no icon for bison so I used the X icon to mark spots where I expected to see bison.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 2 shows my last map before leaving for the hunt. In a 2 month period I added quite a few areas as potential herd locations based on a lot of reading, checking with other hunters, and talking with the

Utah F&G bison biologist. The general consensus was that this western area near the Colorado border of the hunt zone was best for the year. Three areas were most promising: Moon Ridge, Winter Ridge, and Seep Ridge.

The plan was made but before time to leave, John had to have surgery on his foot. If he was able to go at all he would be in some sort of cast. We knew I would need help, at the very least in packing out and most likely with some of the actual hunt. We reached out to Huntin' Fool and they recommended JT Robbins of Allout Outfitters. We talked at length, letting JT know we wanted to do it on our own as much as possible and that was great with him. He would provide camp and help us when needed.

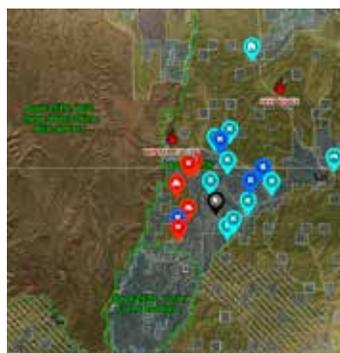


Figure 3

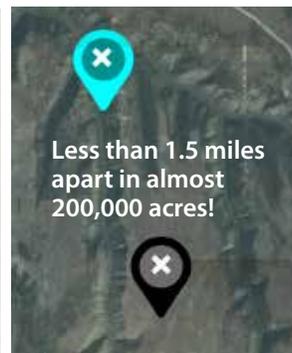


Figure 4

Fast forward to the hunt and my mapping is spot on for how to arrive and where to be looking for bison. Figure 3 shows my map along with the locations that we actually hunted, camped, etc.

Figure 4 is the one that really shows the best detail -- where I thought my best chance to get a bison was before leaving — and where I actually shot the bison!

On my Utah map I also have markers for where I saw elk herds, wild horses, and other details that will help if John or I get drawn for the Book Cliffs again.

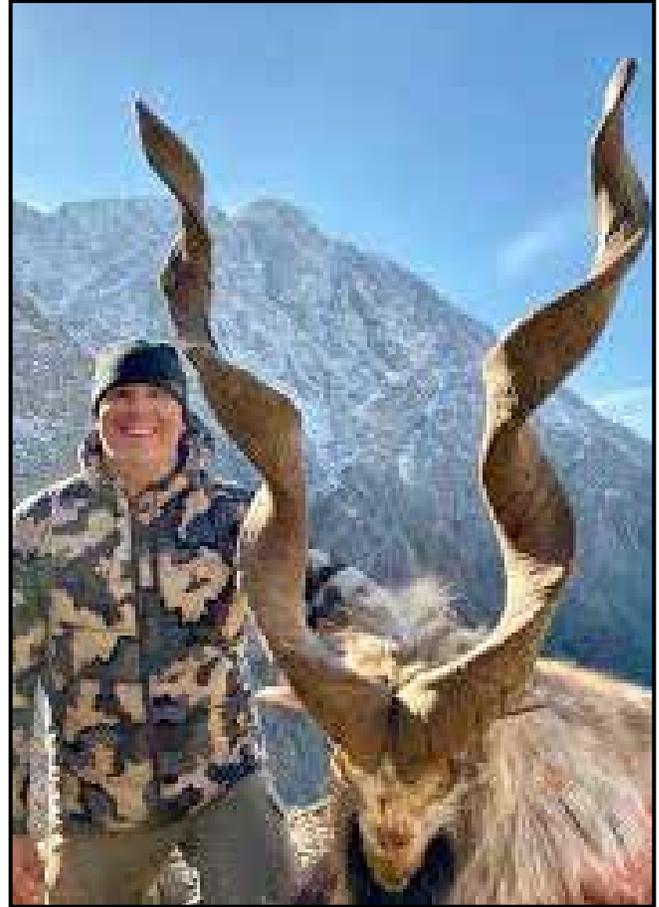
Scouting in real life while using onX maps to keep track of your findings is even better. For my pre-scouting I needed to do a lot of referrals to regular maps and look for long/lat locations, GPS, or other methods to really figure out some of the specific locations. When scouting in person you just use the "Add waypoint" and fill in what you saw or found. Sometimes I take a photo of a location (like where I placed a trail camera which I consistently forget) so that I can find the location even easier.

I find onX Maps to be one of the best tools in my general use gear and would never go hunting without it!

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



**Distinguished Life Member Robert Keagy
Second Stone Sheep
Circa 1981**



**Life Member Richard Papapietro
Pakistan Bukharan Markhor
2020**



**Life Member Maggi Kouffeld
New Zealand tahr**



**Member Steve Salvador
with Kika International team
Cady Mountains ram**



**Royce "Pablo" Maples
NM Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep
2020**

SPECIAL THANKS TO CA WSF MEMBERS

Donation of 3000-Gallon Bladder Tank to SCBS

by Scott Gibson, Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep, CA WSF Member

When California's Desert Bighorn Sheep needed us, the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation was there and ready.

The Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS), is an affiliate of WSF, and sister organization to CA WSF. Founded in 1964, SCBS has been dedicated to the restoration of the Bighorn Sheep population in California through habitat enhancement and water developments. SCBS is composed of volunteers who donate their time and labor working on behalf of Bighorn Sheep, mostly in the desert areas. SCBS volunteers currently maintain over (90) water developments in California's desert bighorn sheep habitat.

In April 2019, SCBS volunteers and California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) personnel became aware of a critical water shortage at the "Old Dad Peak" wildlife drinker, located in the Old Dad Mountains within the Mojave Preserve. A plan to haul emergency water to the drinker was quickly hatched.

CDFW had pre-scheduled helicopter sheep surveys and captures in the area, SCBS would have minimum time to utilize precious helicopter time to haul water via firefighting bucket to the drinker deep in the rugged wilderness. Helicopter time is expensive, efficiency when hauling water is critical to maximize use of the expensive helicopter resource.

Here is where CA WSF comes in:

Traditionally, SCBS and CDFW utilize a surplus 3000-gallon flexible "bladder type" tank for the helicopter to dip water. The 3000 gallon tank is kept full from smaller tanks carried by 4X4 trucks, who often have to drive hours round trip to bring the water to the remote location. As the helicopter dips water from the bladder tank, the water level in the tank drops and the helicopter is not able to carry full loads.



From past experience we recognized the importance of efficiency and decided a second flexible tank could be used to keep the helicopter "dip-tank" full, thus allowing the helicopter to maximize haul trips to the drinker. A phone call was made to CA WSF, with immediate agreement to help and the second tank was quickly purchased for SCBS.

The CA WSF tank was deployed and filled on April 29th, 2019. 6,000 gallons of emergency water was hauled to the "Old Dad Peak" drinker on April 30th.



Bighorn Sheep at "Old Dad Peak" drinker were happy and able to make it through the hot summer months with plenty of water.

In September of 2019, summer monsoons failed to reach the Clipper Mountains in the Mojave Desert. The CA WSF "dip tank" was again used to haul water to the "Clipper" and "Marvin Wood" drinkers in the Clipper Mountain Wilderness.



Helicopter bucket hauling 300-gallons of water from the "dip-tank" deep in to the Clipper Mountain Wilderness. Over 9000 gallons of water was hauled via helicopter to the "Marvin Wood" and "Clipper" wildlife drinkers.



Sheep drinking from the Marvin Wood Drinker in the Clipper Mountains Wilderness. (Photo courtesy of Terry Anderson, San Geronio Wilderness Outfitters)

October 2019, in cooperation with NPS (the National Park Service, Mojave Preserve), CDFW and SCBS, the “Old Dad Peak” wildlife drinker was replaced and upgraded to 9000-gallons of storage. First installed in 1974, the “Old Dad Peak” area has become known as the “Lamb Factory” due to its unique limestone geology (cooler temperatures during



summer months). Once again the CA WSF dip tank was deployed to haul an additional 3000-gallons in to the Old Dad Mountains.

CAWSF bladder tank deployed once again, July 26, 2020.

The CA WSF tank will likely continue to be used to bring much needed water and help keep sheep on the mountain for many years to come. **Thank you CAWSF members for the contribution to helping sheep in California.**

TALK IS SHEEP – WILD SHEEP SOCIETY OF BC

August is right around the corner, and for many of us that represents one of the most coveted times of the year — sheep opener. Undoubtedly, you have been preparing for this for months. Strength & conditioning, e-scouting, food lists, gear prep, and upgrades. But when it comes to a successful sheep hunt, often gear isn't the most important factor — despite being the fun and easy one.

Sheep ID is one of the most important pieces of the sheep hunters arsenal – the best optics in the world won't help if you don't know what you are looking at. Thankfully, the folks at the Wild Sheep Society of B.C. are on top of this, and will be rolling out a series of Zoom webinars titled “Talk is Sheep”.

In the first installment, WSSBC's Communication Committee sits down with Provincial Wild Sheep and Mountain Goat Specialist Bill Jex to talk about horn aging and an update on a WSSBC supported Stone Sheep Project in the Cassiars.

This video is long (1.5 hours) by YouTube standards but it includes a lot of information. Do you know the one-year bulge and how to find it? If you can't “feel” the one year bulge you can't really age the sheep accurately! And is that really an age ring or not? Maybe is “fake age” patterning. This video will really



help you learn a lot more about the horns and aging your ram.

Go to YouTube to see the video, https://youtu.be/pWJA2ZFKz_w

Editor's Note: We would like to thank the WSSBC for allowing us to share this content.

PRESIDENT TRUMP SIGNS GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT INTO PERMANENT LAW, A HISTORIC DAY FOR SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

August 4, 2020 (WASHINGTON, D.C.) - Earlier today, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) President, Jeff Crane, joined President Donald Trump as he signed the Great American Outdoors Act into permanent federal law, marking a day that will go down in history as a milestone for sportsmen and women across our nation. The Great American Outdoors Act is now codified as federal law that will enhance conservation and access to public lands and waters today and for generations to come.

Signing the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) into law represents the single greatest financial commitment to increasing public land access and opportunities for sportsmen and women in a lifetime, and marks a monumental victory for the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) in its work on behalf of hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers.

The Great American Outdoors Act, which passed the House last month on a vote of 310-107, and passed the Senate in June on a vote of 73-25, will provide \$9.5 billion over 5 years to address the crumbling infrastructure on America's public lands and waters. While the National Park Service will receive \$6.5 billion in funding, CSF led a successful effort to secure the inclusion of \$3 billion to repair and maintain public land infrastructure overseen by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS), agencies that provide critically important recreational opportunities for America's sportsmen and women.

"We have been working on this effort for many years, and we are thrilled that the Great American Outdoors Act is now permanent federal law with the President's signature. This is a once-in-a-lifetime victory for sportsmen and women," said CSF President Jeff Crane. "Now, we will finally realize the benefits of increased conservation funding, increased access for hunters and anglers, more support for public lands and waters, and a boost in the sporting-conservation economy. CSF extends our sincere thanks to the House and Senate Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC) members that championed and voted to support these priorities."

The inclusion of funding specifically for BLM, USFWS, and USFS lands and waters will ensure that Americans have the ability to access critically

important hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting opportunities. Over 246 million acres, or 99%, of BLM lands are open to hunting and fishing while the USFS reports that 99% of the 193 million acres it administers are open to hunting and at least 99% of USFS administered rivers, streams, and lakes are open to fishing. Collectively, BLM, USFWS, and USFS annually support more than 25 million hunting days and nearly 45 million fishing days, highlighting the importance of these lands for America's sportsmen and women as well as the outdoor economy. Additionally, funding to address these agencies' maintenance backlog will create over 100,000 employment opportunities.

The Great American Outdoors Act also provides full and permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at \$900 million annually. LWCF is one of the most successful and influential conservation programs in our nation's history. As a testament to the impact of LWCF, the program has completed a conservation, recreation, or access project in every single county in the country. GAOA also ensures \$15 million annually is dedicated to increase public access for hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, and other forms of outdoor recreation.

While the Great American Outdoors Act is a significant victory, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation continues to push ahead and ensure that the interests of sportsmen and women remain a top priority in the halls of government.



DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP PROGRAM UPDATE

*The California Department of Fish & Wildlife, Region 6
Paige Prentice*

The desert bighorn team is doing its best to adjust and adapt to current circumstances. Early this summer we conducted our yearly ground survey in the Marble Mountains. Anticipating that we might not be able to fly helicopter surveys due to COVID-19 restrictions we also conducted a short ground survey in the Newberry Mountains to assess overall population health and recruitment—all animals observed appeared healthy and recruitment fell within expectations. We were also able to conduct a modified ground survey in the White Mountains, the numbers in the table below do not include Silver Canyon, south of White Mountain Peak, or north of the “jump-off.”



Table 1 provides the composition of animals seen on all three surveys, as well as lamb to ewe and yearling to ewe ratios. We were able to calculate mark-resight estimates for adult ewes in the Marble and White Mountains, but we did not have enough collars in the survey area of the Newberry Mountains to calculate an estimate. It is also worth noting that the Newberry survey was a sub-portion of the range and did not include the Ord Mountains or the Rodman—we still expect the total population of this

unit to be between 400-500 individuals. In addition to ground surveys, we placed cameras at water sources in several mountain ranges, from which we will calculate population estimates at the end of summer.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we will not be flying helicopter surveys this fall. We do plan to conduct captures across the Mojave Desert in November. However, we will not be able to accept volunteer help due to the need to keep basecamp personnel to a minimum. Please keep an eye out for a capture summary in the next newsletter!

Table 1: Survey Composition, Spring 2020

Range	Date	Yearling Ewe	Adult Ewe	Total Ewe	Yearling Ram	Adult Ram	Total Ram	Lambs	Total	Lamb to Ewe Ratio	Yearling to Ewe Ratio	Ewe Estimate	Ewe Lower Confidence Interval	Ewe Upper Confidence Interval	Estimate Type
White	Aug 4-6th	18	128	146	8	45	41	14	201	12 to 100	20 to 100	260	133	387	Mark-resight
Marble	June 3rd	1	61	62	3	16	19	23	104	50 to 100	7 to 100	118	70	166	Mark-resight
Newberry	June 2nd	6	53	59	5	10	15	20	94	47 to 100	21 to 100	Not enough collars for a mark-resight			



A skyline group of desert bighorn in the White Mountains, spring 2020. Photo credit: Lily Harrison

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UPDATE

by Don Priest

I hope the COVID -19 virus hasn't dampened your summer too much, and some fun was had by all.

Unfortunately, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) operations has not been spared from the effects of COVID-19. The virus has negatively impacted CDFW's budget, thus for 2020 there will be no population surveys via helicopter in the fall. This is very unfortunate as the last few years' surveys have had much success in certain mountain ranges. Numbers in some of these ranges were much more encouraging than had been expected, and annual monitoring of population sizes and changes would be very beneficial to Desert Bighorn Sheep (DBS) recovery, conservation, and management. On a positive note, we still anticipate that DBS captures by CDFW will happen in late fall for collaring, along with the taking of measurements and blood samples, prior to being re-released back to their point of capture. Cross your fingers that these captures will continue as planned.

XPRESSWEST HIGH SPEED RAIL LINE

The XpressWest High Speed Rail Project (Project) has been sitting on the back burner for nearly a decade. This planned high speed rail line is to run from Victorville, California to Las Vegas, Nevada. In the past year the Project has lived up to its name of 'High Speed' as movement to begin construction of the Project is at a quickened pace.

This has set off alarm bells across the Mojave Desert conservation community, including us at the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation (CA WSF). We have been working tirelessly, cooperating with many organizations, conservation groups and government agencies to find connectivity mitigation to this Project. As you could imagine this Project's obstructions will not only effect DBS, but the protected desert tortoise, desert kit fox, coyotes, and other wildlife.

Within California the rail line will run from Victorville to the Nevada State line within the median of US Highway Interstate 15's (I-15) north and south bound lanes. The rail line will be paralleled on both sides by at least a twenty foot tall safety wall. This wall will simply cut off any opportunity for DBS to migrate between mountain ranges that surround both sides of I-15.

DBS experts Clint Epps and Christina Aiello, in cooperation with CDFW, have worked tirelessly in the desert to understand DBS movements along pertinent highways, including I-15. They have produced a report



citing those locations along I-15 that will be most severely impacted by this Project. This report has been shared with the many interested organizations and pertinent government agencies. Thanks to all of them for their hard work and dedication in writing this report.

CA WSF has also been busy meeting and/or communicating with both State and, especially, Federal Agencies, regarding the negative connectivity impacts of the Project. In 2011 the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) signed off on the Project's original Environmental Impact Study (EIS) as is required for such development's by the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). The FRA is the lead agency in determining if any additional EIS review is now required given recent changes to the Project's design. This may thus require a Supplemental EIS to the Project's originally approved 2011 EIS.

In the past few weeks CA WSF met via conference call with the FRA to discuss our concerns for this Project and the need for a Supplemental EIS and mitigation. The above mentioned report by Epps/Aiello/CDFW, along with additional DBS movement details, have been provided to the FRA. We also recently met with US Surface Transportation Board, as they are a Coordinating Agency with the FRA. The sole State of California cooperating agency is the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

CA WSF is working with both Caltrans and CDFW on the need for further NEPA review. This is being done directly and in cooperation with other conservation groups to find mitigation to this Project through the desired construction of new wildlife specific over-crossings and/or under-crossing improvements. We believe that Caltrans has a strategic imperative to make that happen as our State's only

cooperating agency. We'll be working tirelessly to persuade Caltrans of this need.

Lastly, we must give a big thank you to Greg Schildwachter and William Kelleher at Water Shed Results in Washington DC and to Bill Gaines of Gaines and Associates here in Sacramento. Their help and guidance has been instrumental in our efforts to effectuate any mitigation by the addition of wildlife crossings that may yet be required for this Project!

PENINSULAR BIGHORN SHEEP JACUMBA HERDS US/MEXICO BORDER BARRIER CONFLICT

Great news with the new Border Barrier (Barrier) conflict along the United States-Mexico border through Imperial County. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) has decided to leave a gap in the Barrier to allow for the continuing migration of the Jacumba herd of

Peninsular Desert Bighorn Sheep (DBS). The area on the Mexico side of the Jacumba Mountains is utilized by ewes for lambing in winter and spring, with rams also frequenting this Mexico side. These movements have been determined by use of GPS collared DBS by the CDFW.

CBP in March 2020 asked for a 'Request for Input' by interested parties to this section of the Barrier's implementation. The United State Fish & Wildlife and separately a joint letter from the Governors' Office of Business, California Natural Resources Agency and California Protection Agency responded to CBP's Request. One of the results having been CBP's decision to leave this open gap in the Barrier for this Jacumba herd of Peninsular DBS!

MILLERS CABIN GUZZLER REPAIR

Before beginning work there was only about .5" of water in the tank. The remains of 3 dead rams and an ewe were found only a 100 yards away from drinker. Thanks to Andrew Pontious, Clint Humprieville, Terry Anderson and Scott Gibson, members of SCBS and CA WSF, we fixed the spring box and we were able to snake out the pipe line. The water is flowing and the 2300 gallon tank is filled with water over flowing. It was 4 days of hard work with 700 miles of driving back and fourth but we got it done.

This guzzler is being used be sheep constantly along with many other birds and mammals in the desert.



CALIFORNIA WILD SHEEP SUMMIT XXVII

June 26, 2020 "Virtual"
by Mike Borel

CA WSF hosted Sheep Summit XXVII as a "virtual" event. As this has proven to be a valuable interactive seminar, we did NOT want COVID-19 to create a hiccup. The purpose of these summits is *"to accomplish more collectively for the Desert Bighorn in CA through sharing and collaboration, than the sum of what each organization can accomplish individually."* Following is a summary of Session XXVII.

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS: CDFW, USFS, USBLM, USNPS (MNP, DV and JT), CAWSE, SCBS, Twentynine Palms Marine Base, Oregon State University, WSF, CA Deer Association, CA mining interests and key independents (including Vern Bleich & Will Glad). 49 persons in all (our largest group ever). CA WSF was represented by Mike Borel, Ken Crother, Don Martin, Don Priest, Glen Pyne, Darryl Williams and Bev Valdez.

INFORMATION REVIEWED:

1. DFW Update - the Big Picture
Stafford Lehr, Scott Gardner & Brad Burkholder
2. Comprehensive Overarching Bighorn Sheep Plan - Status and Overview of Key Recommendations; Herd Unit Management Plans - Status and Overview of Key Recommendations; Discussion on "implementation"
Scott Gardner, Brad Burkholder & Tom Stephenson
3. Desert Bighorn Sheep Update from the Regions - Captures and Field Work
Jeff Villepique and Paige Prentice
4. CALTRANS Update on Topics of Interest for Bighorn Sheep Management: Reports from CALTRANS (include where sheep incidents have occurred in recent years)
Scott Gibson
5. Risks and Benefits associated with increased DBH connectivity - what are the factors? What is the balance?
Clint Epps
6. New RWWS Installations Planned
Steve Marschke

7. Prioritized list of current guzzlers for replacement or major repair
Scott Gibson
8. Sierra Nevada Bighorn Update
Tom Stephenson
9. Wildlife Drinker repair protocols - Efforts to streamline/simplify
Neal Darby
10. Latest Grazing Information in the CA Desert Conservation Area
Jack Hamby
11. Project Report on AI for sorting and interpreting waterhole pictures
Will Glad
12. GALAD (Give a Lamb a Drink) State Lands status, progress
Steve Marschke (leases) & Mike Borel (funding)
13. SCBS Update
Steve Marschke
14. Report on Recent Activities in WAFWA, Wild Sheep & Goat Council, Desert Bighorn Council, Boone & Crockett Club, WHBAB, etc. that are of value and interest for CA wild sheep
Vern Bleich
15. Issues CA WSF is currently working on
Don Priest

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.

Summit XXVIII is scheduled for December 11, 2020 in Ontario. Hopefully this meeting will be in person if possible, virtual if not.

CA WSF — WORKING TO KEEP YOU IN THE FIELD

by Bill Gaines
Gaines and Associates

A Strange 2020 Session Nears the Finish Line

There is never a dull moment when the California State Legislature is open for business. But, as of late August, with only eight days left in a 2020 Session that was unexpectedly shortened by 10 weeks, things are especially frantic.

Below is a summary and latest status of just some of the many bills the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation (CA WSF) has been actively working the past several months on behalf of our members. The status of the bills below is as of August 22, 2020. The State Legislature is scheduled to adjourn for final recess at close of business August 31, 2020.

AB 2523 (GRAY) – YOUTH HUNTING PROGRAM: SPECIAL HUNTING PERMITS – DEAD

AB 2523 would have required the Fish and Game Commission to establish a program to increase opportunities to hunt big game, upland game birds and migratory game birds for youth under the age of 18 with terminal illnesses or who have lost a parent in service to the state or country.

AB 2523 failed to pass out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee in June.

AB 3022 (OBERNOLTE) – JUNIOR HUNTING LICENSES: AGE ELIGIBILITY – DEAD

Legislation passed in 2014 increased junior hunting license age eligibility from 15 to 17 years of age. However, that bill included a “sunset” provision which required the age eligibility to revert to 15 years on July 1, 2020 – the beginning of the current 2020/2021 hunting license year.

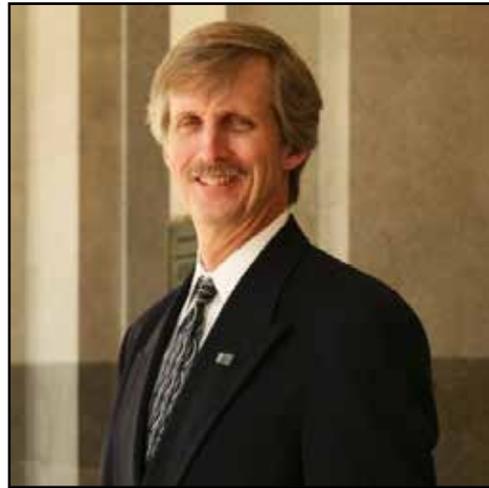
AB 3022 would have extended the “sunset” for one year to July 1, 2021, and – in order to have the bill take effect before the July 1st commencement of the 2020/2021 license year – AB 3022 included an urgency statute which would have allowed the bill to take effect immediately upon enactment.

AB 3022 failed to pass out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee in June.

AB 3030 (KALRA) – RESOURCE CONSERVATION: LAND AND OCEAN CONSERVATION GOALS – DEAD

AB 3030 would have declared it to be goals of the state to protect at least 30% of California’s land areas and waters; to help advance the protection of 30% of the nation’s oceans by the year 2030.

Although, on the surface, the goals of this legislation may appear laudable by many in the hunting and angling community, the poorly written nature of this bill caused great concern. Among many other



things, the bill called out goals for the total percentage of our lands and waters that should be “protected” but its language failed to identify the extent of existing protections already in place (i.e. the baseline). Even more troubling, the bill did not expressly define what the legislation meant by the word “protect”. As such, should the intent of AB 3030 been interpreted, and thus implemented, wrongly over the next decade, the “protections” AB 3030 called for could have resulted in sweeping closures to public access to much of California’s lands and waters, and the hunting and fishing opportunities they currently do or could provide.

To address our many concerns, CA WSF worked with partners in wildlife and fishery conservation to seek amendments to the bill. As a result of these efforts, language was placed in AB 3030 that would have also made it a goal of the state to improve access to nature and to provide for recreational and educational opportunities for all of California’s public, including wildlife-dependent recreational activities, with a specific emphasis on increasing access for communities of color and the economically disadvantaged. In addition, at our request, language was placed in the bill which stated that protection goals called out are not intended to undermine the Fish and Game Commission’s authority to manage the fish and wildlife resources of the state.

Although our efforts did result in many positive changes in the language of AB 3030, CA WSF still had some remaining serious concerns with the bill – most notably the lingering need to define the word “protect” to ensure future interpretation of the purpose of the bill would not be to restrict access or deny legal recreational take of our fishery and/or wildlife resources.

AB 3030 failed to pass out of the Senate Appropriations Committee by the late August legislative deadline.

SB 914 (PORTANTINO) – FIREARMS: HUNTING EXEMPTIONS – ALIVE

Existing law prohibits the sale or transfer of a firearm by a firearm dealer to a person under 21 years of age, but exempts from those provisions the sale or transfer of a firearm – other than a handgun or semiautomatic centerfire rifle – to a person 18 years of age or older who possesses a valid, unexpired hunting license.

SB 914 would require that, for the sale or transfer of a long gun to a person under 21 years of age, the salesperson must visually inspect the hunting license to confirm that it is valid and unexpired, and record the license number, GO ID, and dates valid. The bill would also require the Department of Justice (DOJ) to verify the validity of the purchaser's hunting license with DFW as part of the background check. SB 914 would also eliminate the \$1.00 fee cap on what DOJ may charge for approval of an ammunition purchase, allowing that fee to be increased without restraint.

SB 914 would also require a parent or legal guardian to personally attend any shooting sports program practice, class, camp, event or hunt where firearms are used by youth – a requirement that would do great harm to our collective Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) effort to promote a stronger future for hunting, fishing, and the shooting sports in California.

SB 914 passed out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee and to the Assembly Floor on August 20th. SB 914 must be passed off the Assembly Floor and to the Governor's desk by close of Session August 31st to remain alive.

SB 1175 (STERN) – “ICONIC AFRICAN SPECIES PROTECTION ACT” – ALIVE

Among other things, SB 1175 would enact the “Iconic African Species Protection Act” and would prohibit the possession of any part, product, or the dead body of African elephant, African lion, leopard, black rhinoceros, white rhinoceros, giraffe, Jentink's duiker, plains zebra, mountain zebra, hippopotamus, and striped hyena. SB 1175 would exempt articles possessed for noncommercial purposes that the owner can demonstrate were in their possession within California before January 1, 2021.

SB 1175 passed out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee and to the Assembly Floor on August 20th. The bill must be passed off the Assembly Floor, go back to the Senate for their concurrence of amendments taken on the Assembly side, and then to the Governor's desk by close of Session August 31st to remain alive.

CALIFORNIA STATE BUDGET – FY 2020/2021

Since Governor Newsom's release of his initial FY 2020/2021 State Budget proposal in early January 2020, CA WSF has been actively working closely with an unprecedented suite of conservation, environmental

and other interested organizations to secure maximum funding approval for DFW's important programs and efforts. It was a long and difficult road, but in late June Governor Newsom signed a FY 2020/2021 State Budget which, in terms of funding appropriated to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), must be considered a victory – given the state's current fiscal situation.

To provide some background on this effort, when the Governor released his initial proposal budget in early January 2020 (pre-COVID) we already had two serious primary concerns: 1) the Governor's initial proposal would have reinstated the July 2020 sunset date for the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) that CA WSF successfully fought very hard to extend for ten more years during the 2019 Legislative Session, and it included a DFW Budget Change Proposal which would have shifted \$18.9 million of HCF “project” funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to fund new staff at DFW unrelated to wildlife project activities.

In March, to let Legislators know of these initial concerns, CA WSF and our partners sent a letter to the Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittee chairs. Eight weeks later, just prior to the release of the Governor's “May Revise” budget proposal, COVID had hit and the financial situation of our state had substantially changed. In response, CA WSF and our partners sent another letter to the Senate and Assembly Budget Committee leadership reiterating our concerns. Days later, in mid-May, Governor Newsom released his “May Revise” budget proposal which proposed to cut deeply into DFW's FY 2020/2021 funding, while also mandating new program work for DFW without providing new staffing. In response, we sent a third letter to Senate and Assembly Budget Committee leadership pointing out the many concerns we had with the Governor's “May Revise” budget proposal. In early June, our letters – combined with our testimony at Budget committee hearings – was rewarded with the Legislature approving and sending to the Governor a budget package which, among other things rejected elimination of HCF and the shift of \$18.9M in important WCB project funding to DFW to cover staff.

In mid-June, with the Legislature having positively addressed many of our concerns in their approved FY 2020/2021 budget package, we sent a final letter to the Governor strongly urging him to embrace these revisions. Our collective efforts were rewarded in late June with the Governor approving the FY 2020/2021 State budget which – although far from ideal – included a \$5 million increase in General Fund allocation to DFW relative to what was allocated the Department in the FY 2019/2020 budget; did not include elimination of the HCF, and avoided the proposed \$18.9M shift of HCF “project” monies from WCB to fund new DFW staff.

Last Campfire



Cliff McDonald

I am saddened to report that our good friend Cliff McDonald passed away recently.

Cliff was instrumental in organizing the refurbishment of dozens (perhaps hundreds) of quail guzzlers throughout the Mojave desert for more than a decade. Cliff was also instrumental in starting the Youth Quail hunt in the Mojave Preserve to introduce new hunters to the sport by pairing them with experienced mentors and hunting dogs.

Those of you that didn't get the chance to help refurbish a quail guzzler with Cliff really missed out on a well run operation. I think it is fair to say that no other maintenance effort was as widespread and effective since the guzzlers were first installed back in the 1950's. We will all miss Cliff!

Steve Marschke, Society for Conservation of Bighorn Sheep

"This is a major loss to small game and quail drinkers and youth hunting experiences." **Mike Borel**

"Sad day. He was a champion of both conservation and sportsman's rights. Truly a modern day hero." **Dave Sims**



Cliff showing us how to do it



Cliff working near Essex 2011



California Chapter
Wild Sheep Foundation
 1630 Williams Hwy #151 Grants Pass, OR 97527
 (650-605-4009 PH / 650-649-1958 Fax)
 cawsf@cawsf.org www.cawsf.org



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION or RENEWAL

Name: _____

Phone: Primary: _____ Alternate: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Preferred method of communication (check one): Phone eMail Fax

Yes, I would like to volunteer to help the California Chapter with its' events and/or projects! Please contact me about volunteer opportunities! (check here)

Yes, I am already a member of Wild Sheep Foundation! My member number is: _____

Do you have a FNAWS (Four North American Wild Sheep)? Yes No

Do you have GSCO Slam®: 1/2 Slam 3/4 Slam Grand Slam

Have you hunted Sheep? Yes No

Do you hunt with a: Rifle: Bow: Muzzleloader: Handgun: Don't Hunt:

Which sheep have you harvested? (Please list and note year) _____

CA WSF Membership:

Annual Membership (\$40) = \$ _____
 Life Membership (\$500) = \$ _____
 Distinguished Life Membership (\$1,500) = \$ _____
 Distinguished Life Membership (\$1,000) (Life upgrade) = \$ _____
 Youth Annual Membership (\$25) = \$ _____
 Youth Life Membership (\$400) = \$ _____

Wild Sheep Foundation Membership:

Annual (\$45) = \$ _____
 3-Year (\$120) = \$ _____
 Family (\$80) = \$ _____
 Life Membership Under age 59 - \$1,000 = \$ _____
 Age 59-64 - \$750 = \$ _____
 Age 65+ - \$500 = \$ _____

Payment Type (check one): Credit/Debit Card Check Enclosed (payable to: "CA WSF")

Credit Card Type: Visa MasterCard Discover AMEX

Cardholder Name: _____ CCV: _____

Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please mail this form to CA WSF, 1630 Williams Hwy #151, Grants Pass, OR 97527 or fax to 650-649-1958.

Don't forget to share this form to your hunting friends and relatives!



CA Wild Sheep Foundation
1630 Williams Hwy #151
Grants Pass, OR 97527

www.cawsf.org

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION

DON'T MISS

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**20TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER
AND BANQUET**

APRIL 24, 2021

SACRAMENTO DOUBLETREE

Bear Claw (temporary) Wildlife Drinker
The Bear Claw (temporary) Wildlife Drinker was installed several years ago in the Sheep Hole Mountains Wilderness (California Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zone 6) when mechanical failure occurred at the permanent Bear Claw (SB31) drinker installation. Although hasty repairs were able to be made to the permanent Bear Claw drinker deep in the mountain wilderness, it was not possible to haul water to refill the tanks. SCBS (Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep) volunteers were able place the temporary Bear Claw tank within a mile of the permanent installation to provide the sheep with the water they would need to make it through the hot summer months. Since the temporary Bear Claw drinker does not have it's own rain water collection system, it must be filled by hauling water via 4x4 trucks. This year, SCBS was able to haul 1000-gallons to the temporary tank on March 29, 2020. There was evidence of recent sheep activity at the time of that water haul.

SCBS volunteers and 4x4 trucks hauling water to Bear Claws (temporary) drinker, March 29, 2020.

Long time SCBS volunteer board member, Mike Morgan, mans the hose while filling the tank.
3/29/20

A trail camera was placed at the drinker, dozens of desert bighorn were recorded, before the camera went "off-line" on May 9th, 2020.

Young rams visiting the Bear Claw (temporary) drinker. SCBS Trail Camera photo taken April 30, 2020.

Water level satellite monitoring of the permanent Bear Claw and Suds Hole drinkers in the Sheep Hole Mountain Wilderness shows heavy water use.

A routine inspection and 275-gallon water haul to the Bear Claw (temporary) drinker was made on August 21, 2020. It should be noted the temporary tank does not have a satellite monitoring

system. During inspection, it was found that the 2300 gallon water tank and mechanical drinker box were empty. Water was quickly gravity fed from the truck's tank and the drinker box quickly began to refill with precious water. 100' of hose stretched while 275-gallons of water is fed in to the 2300-gallon temporary tank.

Unfortunately, a mechanical failure in the float controlled drinker box was found. The failure must have occurred at some point after the trail camera went off line on May 9th. The float valve had failed and a spare was not on hand.

A repair trip and water haul is scheduled for Sunday, August 23, 2020. A new trail camera will be set on the drinker and SCBS will hopefully report a successful repair and happy Desert Bighorn Sheep.







