



California Wild Sheep

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Brock Hinton
Cady Mountains
Hunting with San Gorgonio Wilderness
Outfitters
2022-23 Season



ULTIMA THULE LODGE

CONTACT: DONALD C. MARTIN 310-766-3921

A large banner with a golden sunset background over mountains and a lake. A small airplane is visible in the sky. The text "ULTIMA THULE LODGE" is in a stylized font, and the contact information is in red. A circular logo with a mountain, tree, and sun is on the left.

From the Editor's Desk

Happy Fall! Hunting season has begun. I did draw one tag (with 24 bonus points!!) in Oregon for Roosevelt Elk. Hope you drew something good too. Tim Mercier, member and retired outfitter, drew an APEX TAG - a Desert Bighorn tag in CA - Best Wishes Tim!

I feel more alive in the Fall with the anticipation of scheduled hunting trips. This issue includes some great hunting stories, fun pictures, drinker work, important information you want to know, fun humor, AND MORE!

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 4Q23 issue is November 20.

Wishing you renewal and success in your hunting this fall!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOTES!

The 2023 Board of Directors election was completed in late June and the newly comprised Board met in early July.

New Board members John Oldenham and Matt St. Martin will join returning members Mike Borel, Matt Burke, Ken Crother, Jim Fitzgerald, Scotty Gibson, Ben Gordon, Bob Keagy, Don Martin, Don Priest, Glen Pyne, Paul Schultheis, Tammy Scott, Brenton Scott, and Mike Torres. See page 4 for Board member term expirations.

We thank our exiting Board members Adam Casagrande and Maggi Kouffeld for their years of commitment to CA WSF and their work for the sheep.

Officers were elected by the Board members at the July meeting. See the next page for list of officers and see page 14 for the committee chairs.

Your continued involvement helps to keep us strong! Take the opportunity every time you can to make your voice heard.

In this issue there are several more ways you can make your membership more valuable to both the organization and yourself. Join a committee! Send us your hunt story — whether you are successful or not! Upgrade your membership and get your friends to join.

Everything that makes the organization better makes it better for you too.

Contact Mike (mike.borel@contextnet.com) or Beverly (forthesheep@gmail.com) for more information.

KENT ROLLINS' MEXICAN CORNBREAD RECIPE

Recipe from YETI

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 Stick Butter
- 1 Large Yellow Onion Chopped
- 1 Large Green or Red Bell Pepper Chopped
- 1 15 oz Can of Creamed Corn
- 4 oz Cream Cheese
- 2 C Shredded Cheddar Cheese Divided
- 2 C Yellow Cornmeal
- 2 C All-Purpose Flour
- 3 Tbsp Baking Powder
- 1 t Salt
- 2 C Buttermilk
- 2 Eggs Beaten
- 1-2 Jalapeños Seeded and Diced
- Bacon Grease or Neutral Oil

PREPARE

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Grab your YETI 12" Cast Iron Skillet and set stovetop heat to medium. Melt the butter, then stir in the onion and bell pepper. Cook for about 5 minutes, or until softened.
3. Stir in the can of creamed corn, cream cheese and 1 cup of cheddar cheese until combined. Continue cooking until the cheeses have melted and the mixture is smooth. Remove from the heat.
4. In a large bowl, combine the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, and salt.
5. Whisk in the buttermilk, eggs, and jalapeños.
6. Stir in the creamed corn mixture until just combined. Don't over mix.
7. Rinse and wipe your YETI 12" Cast Iron Skillet dry before returning it to the stovetop over low heat. Generously grease the sides with bacon grease or neutral oil.
8. Pour the batter evenly into the pan. Bake for about 30 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean. About 5 minutes before the cornbread is done, sprinkle the top with the remaining 1 cup of cheese.
9. Remove from the oven and allow to cool about 10 minutes before serving to allow the cornbread to set up a bit.

Board of Directors

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Robert Keagy (2025)	Brenton Scott (2024)
John Oldenkamp (2025)	Matt St. Martin (2025)
Don Priest (2024)	Mike Torres (2025)

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.

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Humorous outtakes provided by Tammy Scott
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Events

2023

November 20	Due date for articles for 4Q2023 CA WSF Newsletter
December 1	Sheep Summit XXXIII Ontario, CA

2024

January 17-20	WSF Sheep Show, Reno
January 31- February 3	SCI Convention, Nashville TN
February 2-4	GSCO Convention, Nashville TN @ SCI National Convention
February 20	Due date for articles for 1Q2024 CA WSF Newsletter
April 26	Sheep Summit XXXIV Sacramento DoubleTree
April 27	CA WSF Fundraising Banquet Sacramento DoubleTree
May 20	Due date for articles for 2Q2024 CA WSF Newsletter
June 1	Watch for your 2024 Board of Directors Election Ballot
June 28	Your Election Ballot is due
August 20	Due date for articles for 3Q2024 CA WSF Newsletter

President's Letter

Well, let's just say...I'm as surprised as you are. I am still your chapter's President... at least for the time being. I will serve as an Interim President at the request of the Board of Directors, pending some changes in the language of our bylaws that will allow me to serve beyond my term limit. I deeply appreciate this vote of confidence from your Board. Thank you. I will do my best to continue to serve the Chapter and its members to the best of my ability.

Sheep season is officially open here in California and already there's drama as Tropical Storm Hillary (appropriately named) makes landfall on opening day of the 2023/24 sheep season. I have spoken with both hunters and guides that were in the field and as of this writing, all the hunters and guides were safely off the mountain before the full force of the storm crashed into the White Mountains. Luckily, we are blessed with long hunting season dates here in California and all the hunters will still have adequate opportunity to take advantage of this "once in a lifetime" opportunity. Good luck to all of you.



I am happy to report that your CA Wild Sheep Foundation Chapter recently participated in California Fish & Wildlife Department's Desert Bighorn Sheep Hunter Orientation at the CDFW Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters on August 12. Many members, and former members, of your Board were invited to speak to the lucky tag-holders and we were happy to sponsor lunch for all of those in attendance. CA WSF Northern CA Vice-President Ken Crother catered the event, and everyone enjoyed a wonderful meal and an opportunity to discuss their upcoming hunt with your Board of Directors, CA Wild Sheep Guides/Outfitters, and CDFW biologists and additional staff. This was the first time since pre-Covid that we have had an opportunity to do an "in-person" orientation meeting for the lucky hunters. I'm confident that we have gained new members because of our participation in this event.

Please be sure to read my brief update regarding our 2024 fundraiser that will be on April 27, next year. We had a very successful event this year and we are working hard to ensure that CA WSF is still the best "Wildlife Conservation Party" in California.

And in closing, I'd like to welcome new CA WSF Board members John Oldenkamp and Matt St. Martin to the Board. And a special thanks to outgoing Board members Adam Casagrande and Maggi Kouffeld for their service and dedication to your chapter. Please have a very safe and successful Fall and I will see many of you in January at the Wild Sheep Foundation National Convention in Reno. I look forward to it!

Donald C. Martin

MY CLARK KINGSTON MOUNTAIN RANGE DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP HUNT

By Bryson Roles

People talk about California's infamous Desert Bighorn Sheep tag like it's a myth. For most that is what it seems, for some they are lucky enough to draw before they realize just how hard it is. I was one of those extremely lucky few. I was lucky enough to draw my Clark Kingston Mountain range sheep tag with just five points at 21 years old.

June 9th, 2022, I had a normal phone call with my brother Blaine, talking to him to see if he had any luck on the draw results. Then I realized I had yet to check my own draw results. I asked my brother to check mine while he was already on the website and his reaction was only the beginning of cloud nine reactions from my entire family and close friends. From there my dad and I started the process of preparing and planning anything and everything that needed to be done before the time came to start the nine-hour drive to camp.

One thing we knew was we needed to find an outfitter. After talking to several, my dad, Brian, got into contact with Josh Schulgen of Sierra Crest Outfitters. We had got in contact with Josh through a friend and after speaking with him, I knew he was the one I wanted to hunt with. We started discussing details of the hunt and what we might expect come season. Once the time came for us to head down to camp we were prepared and excited beyond measure. The time was finally here. I had so much support from family and friends. On my hunt I had my dad, brother Blaine, my two cousins Cody and Michael, my two uncles Paul and Perry, and a great family friend, Derek.

Day 1 showed us some nasty weather. It was extremely windy, cloudy, and rainy which made it difficult to glass up any sheep. We spent all day, groups scattered all over the unit covering as much ground as possible. After hours of glassing different areas and seeing no rams, we decided to take this time to dial in the gun one last time. As we were shooting the gun Josh received a call from one of his guys saying they had spotted a ram. We packed up and made our way in the direction he was at! When we got there the ram was in the same spot on the side of the mountain feeding. Words cannot describe how exciting it was to see a ram of this size in person for the first time. After moving up another 700 yards to size up the ram, Josh and I had decided it was not the one I was willing to shoot on the first day. It was amazing getting to watch him at that distance.

Days 2 and 3 were very different. We had beautiful weather, and we got our first taste of how nasty the landscape really was. Everyone in the camp covered miles on foot on multiple different ranges in the zone to try and pinpoint a potential shooter ram. We hiked up thousands of feet to get good vantage



Bryson Roles and his miracle-Draw ram

points and spent hours glassing miles of terrain. All we could manage to stir up were some deer, burros, and a couple young rams that were not legal. After day 3, we realized just how difficult these sheep were to hunt. Running around in groups in a unit this size proved to be a challenge to be confident in any one area. We had put hours behind the glass in hopes of finding a shooter ram. With a once in a lifetime tag in my pocket I kept high spirits. I knew at some point we would get a break.

Day 4 was just what we needed. In the early hours of the morning Josh glassed up what looked to be a good ram miles away. He was on a completely different mountain range on the skyline cresting over to the other side. Already being committed to our range, we decided to keep the same game plan for the day and Josh would send one of his guides, Jake Berry, to go to the other mountain to try and locate the ram and get a better look at him. After spending hours glassing and only picking up a few ewes, we decided to make a move and go help Jake locate the ram the last part of the day.

That evening we decided to hike up to where the ram last was seen with everyone surrounding the mountain. Just before the sun was setting, Josh received a call from Blaine. He relayed that he was watching three rams in a canyon between us and himself and one looked good. Blaine stayed on those rams until the sun went down just in case they decided to make a move. We were excited what the next day would bring.

Day 5 will be remembered as one of the most exhilarating days of my life. We put together a solid game plan to have the mountain range surrounded by everyone. Josh, Dani, Spencer, and I hiked into the center of the range just in case the sheep went into the only canyon not visible from the outside. Just as we were cresting the canyon, we received a call from a Jake who

was glassing from miles out. He said there was a ram heading our direction and to get ready. Not long after, the ram topped out 300 yards from us. It was incredible to be this close. Josh studied him for a quick second and said he isn't the ram we are after.

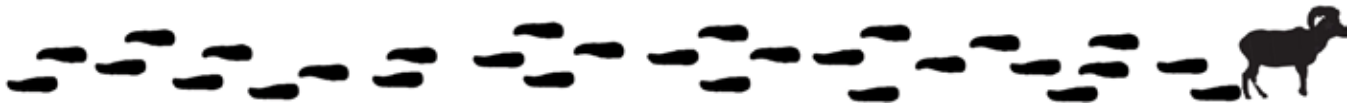
Not much later my brother Blaine spotted the rams from the night before again. They weren't far from us! We immediately we sprang into action and made our move. Josh sent Spencer to the tallest mountain to get a better vantage point to spot the rams just in case we needed guidance. This helped mitigate the risk of being spotted by the rams as we closed in. We moved fast to get into position. Running over rough terrain and steep hills to finally get into a good spot where we were finally able to lay eyes on the rams. After confirming their location from Spencer, Josh and I made our move on the mountain and slowly crept up until we finally laid eyes on this amazing ram. He was bedded down, perfectly broadside and didn't have a clue in the world we were there. Josh ranged him at 350 yards. We crawled up and rested a pack on some rocks. I found the ram in the scope and squeezed the trigger.

I couldn't believe the amount of excitement and weight lifted off my shoulders I had. Cheers were echoing off the canyon walls from all over as everyone heard the shot. A once in a lifetime hunt with a storybook ending on a beautiful 10-year-old ram.



Family, friends, and the Sierra Crest Outfitters team join Bryson Roles and his Clark Kingston ram

I am extremely grateful for Josh and the entire Sierra Crest Outfitter crew as well as my family that made the trip down there for me. None of this would have been possible without the help from each person in that amazing camp. I'm ready for the next sheep hunt with the same crew!



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- Jarrett Dewling, Dewling Stone Outfitters

JOY AND SORROW

By Andrew Pontious, CA WSF Member, San Geronio Wilderness Outfitters

Some trips are all joy, some are all sorrow. This is the story of one that is filled both with joy and sorrow. Brock Hinton was drawn for a California ram tag in the Cady Mountains in the 2022-23 season. What a great joy that was for this professional man as he heard the draw results in his office! He immediately shared the good news with his friend Terry and they began looking forward to a great hunt.

When returning in the fall from a trip to Arizona, Brock met up with Terry Anderson and they went on a tour of a drifter where they had ewes and lambs in the area along with some young rams. That's enough to get anyone excited, hunting or not! Brock then began getting ready and was determined to be prepared for the hunt. As we all would he began hiking, reading, thinking, and dreaming sheep. He would go scouting any chance he had and often saw lots of activity with younger rams but not so much of the mature rams he was looking forward to seeing. It's hard to imagine what a great ram will look like in the binos or scope of your rifle.

The evening before season opening, Brock came to camp and everyone was feeling easy and ready for a really great hunt. That first evening is so important to creating the solid team that will work for the following days to get the best ram possible. Brock's attitude and friendliness made team cohesion easy.

On the first day of hunting there were a lot of sheep up at the top of the mountain but as we moved to them they, of course, moved away. This stayed true for the next couple of



Brock Hinton and his ram

days. We would see the rams, then they would disappear into the mountain. Evenings we would plan out the next day. Brock is artistic and showed everyone photos of his hand carved figures of various wildlife... birds, mammals, etc. Very good representations and amazing art!

Early on day 6, Brock received a message about a family emergency with his father. He decided to stay on the hunt but now there was more urgency to get the hunt done successfully and quickly. That day our spotting team of Terry Anderson, Brad Aboltin, and Brock's friend Terry got a sighting of a group of rams that we had seen briefly a few days before – and one of them was definitely in the shooter range. The entire team pulled together to make this the day. Brock, Colin Jewett, Don and I hiked into the area where Don had spotted the sheep. We got to within 500 yards and Brock took a good shot and we all had reason to celebrate.

Brock was very emotional then and thankful to have had this opportunity. Also helping on the hunt was Tim Macabee, Ed Kerr, and Brock's friend Terry. We had a nice evening dinner and took plenty of photos before calling it a night. Friend Terry was a really good photographer and photos on this page were taken by him.

The next day Brock headed home where the sorrow followed joy as his father passed away soon thereafter. He decided to have a full body mount for his ram. It will always be a remembrance of both the joy and the sorrow.



Brock Hinton and the SGWO team with Brock's Cady Mtn ram

NEWBERRY, RODMAN, AND ORD MOUNTAINS DESERT BIGHORN

by Tom Loy, Member

My story started some 25 years or so ago, when I decided to start putting in for California's Nelson (Desert) Bighorn Sheep tag. Each year I would go through the motions of completing my deer, elk and Bighorn sheep tag applications. In 2016, I was lucky enough to get drawn for a SHARE cow elk tag for the Smith River hunt on the Green Diamond Timber Lease. I filled that tag opening day just after one in the afternoon. My hunting buddy, Dave Andrew who was with me on my cow elk hunt, got drawn for a SHARE elk tag on the Copher Ranch in Orick in 2017. I was also with him when he filled the tag at the ranch.

We all know that California's special draw hunts are few and far between. So this past June when I viewed the DFW's tag draw results my eyes went right to the deer tag section, which I had applied together with my son, daughter, and son in law. I saw that it showed "unsuccessful" for our first deer tag choice, but I failed to even glance at the elk or Bighorn draw. Disappointed that we didn't draw our number one deer area, I screenshot the results and text it to my son in law. Within minutes, I received a text from my son in law, "You drew the sheep tag?" I was wondering what he was talking about when I looked at the screenshot results I sent him. Right at the top, ***Bighorn Sheep, Zone 510-Newberry, Rodman, and Ord Mountains (SUCCESSFUL)***. Holy smokes! After two and a half decades, I hit the California hunting lotto! Each year I put in for this tag, I wondered more and more if I would get drawn while I was still physically able to complete the hunt.

After carrying a gun belt as a police officer for 32 years, I've had back and hip issues off and on over the years, plus damaged ankles from playing football and basketball since I was in grade school. I knew I would have to increase my exercise and workouts to make this hunt possible. I was already riding my bike several days a week but added long walks and daily hikes up into the hills above San Dimas from my house in La Verne. I had a few setbacks when I had minor surgery on one of my toes at the end of August. Then I had two lumps removed near my vertebrae in late October. These issues shut my workouts down for a couple weeks, slowing down my workout routine.

When I first got drawn for the sheep tag, I knew I would have to go with an outfitter. I spoke to four different guides and narrowed it down to one, Cliff St. Martin of Dry Creek Outfitters. Since the day I confirmed I was going with Dry Creek Outfitters, Cliff was pleasant but all business. He sent me a checklist of items needed for the adventure. He made sure all questions were answered so there were no surprises when I pulled into camp.

My daughter, Jill, and my son in law, Dereck, have been hunting with me every year. We have hunted in Wyoming, Colorado and Arizona and have been successful. When discussing my Bighorn Sheep hunt with them, I didn't have



Tom Loy with his desert bighorn

to ask if they would go. They just said, "When are we going?" Even with their busy work schedules there was no doubt they would be there for my hunt.

I left my house in La Verne at noon on Friday December 2. After waiting 25 years, it was a surreal moment when I was driving on I-15 up the Cajon Pass by myself with all my gear in my Suburban. There's no doubt that I brought everything I needed since I made a checklist months prior and went over it almost everyday to make sure I didn't forget anything. Dereck and Jill were going to meet me in camp later in the afternoon since they had to work. Upon arriving in Barstow, I gassed up and grabbed a sandwich before the hour drive into my outfitter's camp in the Newberry/Ord Mountain range. I sent Cliff a text to give him a "heads up" that I'll be in camp soon.

After an hour, mostly on a dirt road, I pulled into camp. The first person I stopped to talk to was the other hunter in camp, Nick Albonico, who wanted to score a Bighorn with his bow. After talking to Nick, I met up with Cliff's entire crew. I knew I picked the right outfitter when I saw their camp layout. There were two full tents and trailers for two groups to eat at the same time. There was a trailer just for ice chests and making sandwiches and preparing snacks for each person in camp.

I offloaded my equipment in the wall tent that was for Jill, Dereck and I. Within minutes, Jill and Dereck arrived. After they offloaded their gear, we had a nice steak dinner waiting for us. Since there were two hunters in camp, Cliff's crew were split in half. Cliff would be my guide and his son Matt would be guiding the bow hunter, Nick. After dinner we split into two groups and went over our strategies. I was told I would have five guides assisting me with my hunt. Most of them had been in the area for days scouting the zone. Cliff mentioned

there were plenty of sheep in this zone. One guide said he saw a nice ram in the lower elevations and would check again in the morning to see if he was in the same area.

On opening day, early morning, Jill, Dereck and I loaded up in Cliff's truck and hit the dirt road in darkness. Our plans were to glass and drive through a mountain pass where some nice rams had been seen. In the meantime, the other guides would spread out and take other roads to get to the other side and glass. As the sun came up, we pulled off the dirt road and we all started glassing. At our second glassing spot before going through the mountain saddle, Cliff spotted two nice rams on the move. As they went out of view, we drove through the saddle and pulled over. Cliff and I walked up the hill to see if the rams would be in view across the canyon. After getting on top and glassing for an hour, we never saw the rams again. We went back to the truck and sent texts to the others to see what our best option was. After several hours and driving down the other side of the canyon, we got word that the ram spotted at low elevation was near the same spot as days before. As we arrived where the others were parked, I could see several of the guides on spotting scopes looking towards the foothills. I got on one of the spotting scopes and saw that it was a shooter. It amazed me that the ram would stand staring in our direction for long periods of time and we were over a mile away. After a while it was in the brush line right below the base of the hills, but slowly feeding towards the hill.

Cliff put together a plan to drive a mile or so around the mountain, out of view, and hike in from the back side of the ridge. We were hoping the ram would stay at a low elevation and we would climb over a smaller outcropping downwind and possibly have a shot down at him. We parked a mile away from the base of the mountain. Cliff and I started hiking towards the hill, while Jill and Dereck stayed at the truck glassing to see if he pops out on a point. As we got close to the hill we were told the ram continued up into the canyon and out of view. We found out later the ram would drop out of sight down into a bowl and pop back up on different points where the guys glassing could see him. We ended up climbing up the steepest part of the mountain to aim for a saddle so we could take a peek into the bowl. As we went up the slide rock, trying to be quiet, we would come to what I thought was the summit. As I got closer to the top I realized it wasn't the top. This happened a half dozen times.

As we made it to the top, Cliff told me we were going to set up along the saddle and glass the canyon. Cliff sat down between rocks so he could peek over and glass the canyon. I sat down out of view, and relaxed my legs which felt like rubber. After an hour, Cliff hurriedly said, "Grab your gun!" Knowing he spotted something I asked, "Shooting sticks?" He said, "No, he's at 35 yards!" I swung my rifle around the right side of a large boulder next to Cliff. As I was looking over my scope, downhill, I could not see him. I took another step to clear the boulder and as I looked over my scope I saw this beautiful ram staring me down. As soon as I looked through my scope I could see the ram get spooked and he disappeared straight downhill behind a huge boulder. I immediately went prone over a boulder, knowing that it will be a longer shot across the canyon if he

decides to stop. Cliff yells, "There he is, across the canyon!" I was looking over my scope and for the life of me I could not see him! Cliff points and says, "He's right there, 300 yards!" A few seconds felt like 10 minutes, I finally spotted him running uphill then he stopped and was looking back at us. I adjusted my Zeiss scope turret for 300 yards and fired my first shot. It looked like I missed since he turned and ran unfazed uphill. He then stopped and looked back at us again. I let my second shot go and the ram shook his head and ran further uphill. He again stopped and looked back at us. Now I figured he was at least 400 yards so I put my crosshairs just over his right shoulder and shot again. This time the ram dropped and rolled about 20 yards downhill before stopping. After a few moments, I heard Cliff talking on the radio. "Ram down! ram down!"

After some well deserved celebration, we traversed the rim of the canyon to the ram which was on a steep hill. It was a beautiful ram and I could now see that my second shot hit the right side of his horn that was just above his back. Cliff and I took several photos and recorded some video. It seemed like just a few minutes later the entire Dry Creek Outfitting crew, my daughter and son in law were arriving at the downed ram. My legs were like rubber and I was barely able to stand on the steep hill, but Cliff's crew had my ram caped, quartered and dispersed in everyone's packs in short order. My son in law was kind enough to haul out the head and cape. The steep, downhill walk out was tiring and treacherous, but we made it back to the trucks right before sundown.

We went back to camp and had a fine dinner. Celebrating with Cliff's crew was like hanging out with lifetime friends. They were knowledgeable, friendly and well prepared. I'm sure there's other fine outfitters out there, but I'd highly recommend Dry Creek Outfitters. Especially when you've been trying to draw a coveted Bighorn Sheep tag for over 20 years! They made my hunt of a lifetime my most unforgettable hunting experience.



Tom Loy with family (front) and Dry Creek Outfitters team (back row)

OLD MAN MOUNTAIN

By Mike Torres, Distinguished Life Member and Board Member

In July of 2023 I was able to complete a sheep hunt I had booked for 4 years with Stan Stevens, MacKenzie Mountain Outfitters (MMO), in the Northwest Territory. This hunt was delayed for years due to the Covid lock down and schedule conflicts. I was looking forward to this backpack hunt with MMO as Stan has been operating for 47 years in his 9,000 square mile untouched wilderness.

I landed at base camp on McClure Lake with 4 other hunters and met the guides, who looked like Seal Team 6. My guide, Jacob Thompson, who is also a helicopter pilot, and I went through my gear and we were flown by copter to a huge flattop mountain. We set up our camp and hiked and glassed for 3 days in 90 degree weather and very smokey conditions due to the huge wildfires in Canada. We covered 8-10 miles per day, but only saw a few young rams and a couple of Mountain Caribou.

On the 4th day Stan asked if we wanted to move to a new location, as he had seen a large ram on a distant mountain range several days ago. We agreed and Stan picked us up at about 9:30 pm. We set up camp for the night and the next day started up the mountain with packs that weighed in excess of 50 lbs. This was very difficult hiking for 2 days in boulders, with the last ascent 2,000 feet straight up a steep chute. When we finally made it to the top Jacob asked me how old I was. When I told him 72 he said I was the oldest hunter to ever make it to the top of this mountain. I asked him what the name of the mountain was and he said that it doesn't have a name but they would call it "Old Man Mountain" from now on.

Old Man Mountain looked very sheepy with excellent forage and bedding areas. We hiked and glassed around



Mike with his tenth ram

the mountain eliminating areas that didn't hold rams. That evening about 9:00pm I was in my Croc slippers just finishing some Mountain House when Jacob said "Don't move, we have 2 rams coming over the saddle". I put my boots on and set up my 300WSM on a Spartan Bipod for a rock solid rest. The rams moved from 750 yds to 450 yds, when they stopped, turned around and slowly started back up the mountain.

I tracked the largest ram in my scope and when he stopped and turned broadside at 510 yards my 300WSM spoke and down he went. We packed up camp and started down the cliffs to the ram. We found my 10th ram to be 40", full curl, and 13 years old. I was very happy with this beautiful ram.

We hiked up to the saddle the rams came from and set up our tents and returned to process the ram and pack him up to our camp. We got back to our camp at 2:00am.

The next morning we contacted Stan for a pickup. He couldn't fly due to the thick smoke until about 4:30 pm. When Stan landed his H505 we loaded up the ram and our gear, and Guide Jacob took the controls and flew us back to base camp. Talk about full service guiding!

When we got back to base camp we found that all 5 hunters had taken mature rams in very hot and smokey conditions.

This was a very difficult hunt for me at my age in those conditions with heavy packs and steep climbing. I owe my success on this hunt to my conditioning program, Stan Stevens' excellent operation, and Guide Jacob Thompson's motivation. I don't believe I could have done it without Jacob's help.





Are YOU a CA Wild Sheep Foundation Distinguished 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:

PEGGY BARNETT LEE
VINCE BLOOM
PEGGY MAY BLOOM
MIKE BOREL
JED BRUSSEAU
ADAM CASAGRANDE
KEVIN CHENG
DAVID COMBS
WILLIAM CULLINS
JIM DISMUKES
NOAH DISMUKES
BRET DISMUKES
DAN EVENSON
SCOTT FINLEY
JIM FITZGERALD
RICK GARZOLI JR
SCOTT GIBSON
ANTHONY GIGLIOTTI
BEN GORDON
TINA GORDON

CORY HIGGINS
TYLER W. HIGGINS
GARY HILL
PATTY HOLLOWAY
ERNEST HOLLOWAY
SHAD HULSE
BRETT JEFFERSON
BOB KEAGY
RANDY LASKOWSKY
JEFF F. MARTIN
DONALD C MARTIN
JOSEPH MASSOLO
ROGER MCCOSKER
RICHARD M. MCDREW
KYLE MEINTZER
NICK METTA
ANDY MOECKEL
PATRICK OILAR
JEREMIAH OLDENKAMP
NATHAN OLDENKAMP

CHRISTOPHER PEATRESS
JEREMY PECHTEL
JEFF PERACCHI
DON PERRIEN
JOHN PESTORICH
DON PRIEST
GLEN PYNE, DVM,
DISTINGUISHED LIFE #5
CONNOR PYNE, DVM,
DISTINGUISHED LIFE #2
CAROLINE PYNE, DVM,
DISTINGUISHED LIFE #1
MADISON PYNE,
DISTINGUISHED LIFE #4
TRAVIS PYNE,
DISTINGUISHED LIFE #3
TOM REA
MASON ROGERS
DAVE ROWAN
PAUL SCHULTHEIS

RICH SELLERS
ALAN SHULTZ
DAN SMITH, III
DAN SMITH, JR.
DANIEL SMITH, JR.
RENEE SNIDER
ADAM STARR
BROOKS STILTZ
BILL TITTLE
MICHAEL TORRES
NATHAN TREADWELL
REUBEN VALLES
ZACK WALTON
JOHN WARE
JIM WARNER
SHAINA WARNER
SIMON WHETZEL
DARRYL WILLIAMS
SHAWN WOOD

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 or a Junior Life Member and receive ONE chance to WIN the special Life Members hunt in 2023.

Upgrade your CA WSF Life Membership (\$1,000)

Upgrade your CA WSF Life Membership to DISTINGUISHED Life Membership (\$1,000) to receive THREE chances to WIN the special Life Members hunt in 2023.

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.

2025 STONE SHEEP HUNT Special Drawing



ONLY 600 TICKETS AVAILABLE

\$100 PER TICKET



Name

Address

City State Post Code

Day Phone

Email

Payment Methods

Check

Make check payable to:
CA Wild Sheep Foundation

MasterCard

Visa

Credit Card Number

Expire Date CCV Code

Billing Postal Code

Signature

Sikanni River Outfitters

Hunt Information

14 day 1x1 hunt with Sikanni River
Outfitters

Dates: August 1 - August 14, 2025

Location: Sikanni River Valley, BC,
Canada

Get Tickets by Mail, Fax, or ON LINE

Mail order form to:

CA WSF

1630 Williams Hwy 151
Grants Pass, OR 97527

FAX order form to:

650-409-6005

ONLINE ORDERS:

www.cawsf.org/store

Orders must be received by April 6, 2024. Drawing held April 27, 2024.

Do not need to be present to win.

2024 ANNUAL BANQUET / FUNDRAISER PREVIEW

by Donald C Martin, Banquet/Fundraising Committee Co-Chair

It's never too early to start planning for our upcoming 2024 Annual Fundraising Banquet. Our event is scheduled for the same location, the Grand Ballroom at the **Doubletree by Hilton in Sacramento on April 27, 2024**. We had a great event this past year and I was so glad to see so many new faces and additional youth attendees. Just be aware that we are planning to exceed last year's event and provide additional opportunities to our members. So, you have 8 months to block out that weekend for CA WSF and the best "Wildlife Conservation Party" in California. Please make a note to attend today!

Our Grand Prize random drawing this year is a **Fully Guided 1x1, 14 day, Stone Sheep Hunt in British Columbia with our friends at Sikanni River Outfitters and Ranch**. Dates for this hunt are scheduled for **August 1-14, 2025**. So, the winner will have one year to prepare. This is a fly-in back-pack hunt with a history of high success rates and quality rams. **Tickets are available now** for purchase at: www.cawsf.org/store.html and there is a 25-ticket limit per customer. This hunt is not transferable. **YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN, so buy your tickets now!**

In addition, we are proud to provide an additional sheep hunting opportunity to our Life members. This year's Life members only grand prize is a **Fully guided 1x1, 10 day, Horseback Dall Sheep Hunt in the Northwest Territories with our friends at Gana River Outfitters in 2025**. Again, the winner will have one year to prepare. We thank Harold Grinde and Board member Matt Burke, for helping us to provide this opportunity to our Life members. This hunt is not transferable. Youth Life members must be 12 years of age or older at the time of the hunt to be eligible. You must be a Life member, at any level, in the room to be automatically entered at no additional cost. Please stay tuned to our next newsletter for potential changes to our life member random drawing. There will likely be additional opportunities to improve your chances of winning this incredible opportunity. Nevertheless, you need only attend to have a chance to win, so make plans now to attend.

As always, your Board will work hard to provide a wide array of appealing items in our live and silent auctions and in our general and special raffles. We are very proud of our family-friendly event that we have built over the last 22 years, and we always seek to do better. Please stay tuned for more details. If you have any suggestions, wish to donate items, or volunteer at our event, please reach out to me at: don-martin@earthlink.net.

Buy your stone sheep tickets now and I look forward to seeing all of you next Spring!



July begins a new year for CA WSF and below are the **2023/2024 California Wild Sheep Foundation Committee Chairs**. You need not be a Board member to be on a committee. If you wish to volunteer, please reach out to us at forthesheep@gmail.com!

Banquet/Fundraiser Committee - Donald C. Martin, Ken Crother

GALAD/Water Project Committee - Mike Borel

Governmental Affairs Committee - Don Priest

Projects Beyond Water Committee - Don Priest

Membership Committee - Maggi Kouffeld

Youth Outreach Committee - Glen Pyne

Newsletter Committee - Mike Borel

Communications Committee - Beverly Valdez

Logo Gear is here!



CALIFORNIA WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT LOGO GEAR IS BACK!

Ready to shop?

- No minimums required!
- For caps/hats and beanies, go to cawssf.org, click on (website location needs to be added). There you will see the various head gear available with your choice of two California Wild Sheep Foundation logo options.
- For various kinds of merchandise, from shirts and jackets to coolers and even drinkware, go to basspro.com and cabelas.com
- Choose the merchandise that you want to order, color, size, and the California Wild Sheep Foundation logo:
 - » For the chest area of a shirt or jacket – options are a 4” circle California Wild Sheep Foundation logo or a 3” circle California Wild Sheep Foundation logo.
 - » For the sleeve of a shirt or jacket, the 3” circle California Wild Sheep Foundation logo is available.
 - » For a bag (ie: tote bag) the 4” circle California Wild Sheep Foundation logo is available.
 - » Drinkware (ie: tumblers, glassware, etc.) has California Wild Sheep Foundation circle logo
- Complete the Order Worksheet and email it to Laurie Parsons at lp Parsons@basspro.com
- Laurie Parsons or Kathleen Matthews will call you to obtain your credit card information, provide you with shipping options and your order total.
- If you have any questions, or would like to place a phone order, call Laurie Parsons at (417) 873-5818 or (800) 243-6626 option 1.
- Because all gear is personalized, returns will not be allowed.

SHOP TODAY at the CA WSF Store where you will find the order form and the various options for hats.

<http://cawssf.org/store.html>

SCOTLAND IRELAND HUNT

By Susan Fitzgerald, Distinguished Life Member

We arrived in Scotland, ready to begin our hunting and touring adventure with Joe Jakobs of Point Blank Hunts. We had travelled and hunted with Joe before and enjoyed a wonderful time. It was a nice surprise when Gregor Stepec, from Slovenia, our friend, guide, and driver for Joe, met us as we arrived in Edinburg, Scotland.

We got out of the busy city and onto the roads leading to our first hunting destination—The Island of Jura. As we drove toward the coast, the landscape was drenched and sparkling as the sun peeped out here and there. Water was pouring off the mountains and cascading into rivers and streams, bogs and pastures. White sheep dotted the hillsides. Rains were blowing across our path and rainbows would appear mixed with swirling mists and clouds. The landscape was gorgeous and alive with myriad waterfalls tumbling down steep mountains of green and the beginnings of fall colors.

It was great to have Gregor as our driver for this trip, a very good and safe driver as we got used to the idea of driving on the opposite side of the road. We continued for several hours enjoying the scenery, including seeing some of the famous Highland cattle, lovely villages, and a statue honoring fallen soldiers. Jim especially loved all the rock and stonework; fences, houses built of stone, and ancient crumbling buildings and castles along the roads.

After several hours we made it to the West coast of Scotland to the town of Oban. It is a picturesque village with fishing and sea trade at the heart of their economy. Oban is a popular tourist destination known for excellent seafood, ocean views and the Oban whiskey distillery. We walked down the quaint, busy streets and Gregor took us to a great little pub where we were served a hearty meal. It was stormy and cold but we loved it, and welcomed the change from our dry, hot weather at home in central California. Our hotel in Oban had a lovely view of the bay and the busy boats and ships entering and leaving port.

The next morning we were up early, drove down the coast, and met the boat for our trip to the Island of Jura. A very nice fellow with a heavy brogue was our captain and we piled into the boat and took off. The sea was very rough and we were hitting waves and swells that took us up and crashed us down. We had to hold on tight to our seats or would have ended up on the floor of the boat. The captain didn't seem worried so I tried to relax, but, it was like a roller coaster ride!

We made it to the island where our hunting guide, (known as stalkers in Scotland) Rob Fischer met us. Rob is a great guide and just a nice guy. It was very wet and soggy. I truly understand what bogs are now, but we were prepared with our rain gear and boots. What an amazing island. Jura is an island in the Inner Hebrides with a population of 200 souls. George Orwell actually wrote 1984 living on Jura. Rob and his family moved from the mainland to live here. They live a very remote and secluded lifestyle. Sometimes the boats can't get here through the rough ocean and they only have power for part of the year so they have to plan



Susan in on the island of Jura in Scotland



Phone booths? Only in Scotland!



The beautiful coast



Jim's Scottish Highland stag)



Jim with Jura Island black goat



Jim with Soay black ram in eastern Scotland

carefully. We were on the east side and it is very mountainous with bogs and steep cliffs running down to the crashing ocean. We were fortunate the sun came out so our day was glorious with misting light rains, sunshine and winds. We were able to see stags on the horizon and one big stag ran in front of us and up into the mountains. I was able to hike for several miles and decided I wouldn't make the cliffs, so Jim, Gregor, and Rob went on. I stayed on the trail overlooking the ocean. I enjoyed lunch, took photos and rested in the beauty of the wild land and waters. Several hours later they came back and Jim had shot a large Jura Island black goat after hiking down some very steep cliffs to the oceans edge where the goats feed on seaweed. After lunch we made the hike back to our pick up location.

We left the following morning and caught a car ferry across the peninsula to the beautiful estate of Laudale in The Highlands of Scotland. Here we met our next stalker Neal, who oversees and manages the estate for the owner. It is absolutely a breathtaking view as we gaze up the highest peaks to see stag on the crests of tall mountains. Everyone is excited. It is raining and cold but no one minds. Jim and the crew pile into the Argo to head up the mountain. A few hours later I hear the Argo. The smile on Jim's face tells me he was successful. He was able to harvest a great stag.

At Fort William we did a little shopping and enjoyed buying meat pies from the local bakery and finding souvenirs in the little shops nearby. The next morning, we took a scenic drive into Glencoe on a beautiful highway up through a massive valley enclosed by tall mountains. It was lovely and we enjoyed the views and the waterfalls pouring from the ravines. We ate in the village at a sweet little café and had hot chocolate and the best carrot cake! Yum!

We drove down to Pippin to see a tower house. (a small castle) It was quite interesting to see. We got some good photos there.

The next morning we left the west coast of Scotland and began our drive to the east coast. The fall colors were gorgeous and we saw some beautiful scenery. Many, many lochs (lakes) surrounded with beautiful fall colors and these trees framing castles on the shores. After a long drive across Scotland we got to the east coast above Dundee to our cottage. The landscape changed from woods to farmland and we wound through small roads with high hedges. The Gardener's cottage is where we stayed. A lovely cottage with a view of the ocean in the distance and Roe deer in the fields surrounding. The farmlands are above the ocean on the bluffs. The views are breath taking and the ocean crashing on the cliffs is spectacular, windy and cold! This is where Jim was going to hunt Soay sheep. The Soay sheep are feral and date back to the days of the Vikings. We drove out to the cliffs above the ocean the next day and began walking the edges and glassing the cliff walls for sheep. We spotted a group of ewes but no rams. We did spook out some roe deer from the bushes above the cliff.

We began glassing the opposite way and spotted a flock of sheep running in the distance. After a hefty hike, Jim was able to take a nice Soay black ram.

The pheasant were thick in the hedgerows and fields edges

and Jim really wanted to hunt some pheasant. He was able to harvest a nice bird. That night we celebrated our hunt with leg of lamb from the sheep, and stag from the Highlands, delicious on both counts!

The next morning we drove to Northern Ireland. It was a fun drive and we spotted a red phone booth where we took photos. We had a wonderful lunch at a charming inn and then hustled to get to the ferry to N. Ireland.

What a giant ferry!!! Hauling cars, semi trucks of all kinds. It was 8 levels high and we had seats looking out to Northern Ireland shores. There were stores and bars and food and even play areas for the children.

We arrived at our guesthouse, with all the amenities for cooking and laundry. We stayed here for several days to finish the planned hunts. Jim went out the next morning and got his first Sika deer with a great stalker named Barney. "Happy Days!" was one of his favorite sayings.

We spent the following day taking a tour of the area and it was fantastic! We drove through several lovely small towns and to the highest mountains in Europe. The views were breath taking. We also went to a castle tour in Donegal and stopped at the tweed mill where I found a gorgeous shawl and Jim found his proper Irish hunting cap. It was a great day and lots of fun. We ended it with a stop for lunch at a 200-year-old pub. We ate oysters, seafood chowder, and Guinness for a total Irish experience.

The next morning Jim went out for a last hunt and harvested a dandy Sika buck! What an excellent morning.

Our last night in Northern Ireland we toasted the successful hunts and new friendships made with a Guinness, a meat pie and a nice Irish whiskey. The next morning we flew out of Dublin. Our trip was finished and I can only say Happy Days!



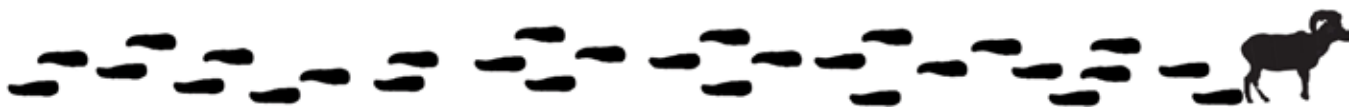
Jim with Sika deer in northern Ireland



Jim and Susan facing the cold for a great trip!

Editor's Note:

Jim and Susan won this great adventure at auction at a recent CA WSF annual fundraiser and dinner! What will you bid on and win? Look for news coming in the next issue!



WORDS OF WISDOM

If you think you are smarter than the previous generation...

50 years ago the owners manual of a car showed you how to adjust the valves.

Today it warns you not to drink the contents of the battery!

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



East Chocolate Mountains drinker with thirsty rams.
Photo from Desert Wildlife Unlimited (DWU) who
manages this drinker.

We need to get this unit re-instated for hunting!



Life Member David Combs
Fishing on the Rogue River and
got two nice salmon



Distinguished Life Member Bob Keagy
Kri-Kri Ibex, Greece
2022.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Life Member Claude Howard
Muskox
March 2023



Life Member Claude Howard
Dall Sheep, Yukon Territory
August 2023
with Rogue Outfitters



Life Member Claude Howard
Billy Goat,
August 2023



Life Member Claude Howard
Desert Sheep, Mexico
February 2023
with Steve Outdoors



Distinguished Life Member Mike Torres
Antelope, Arizona 2023
Won hunt in a raffle benefiting AZ Antelope Foundation



Sierra Nevada Sheep
Photo courtesy of Josh Schulgen, Sierra Crest Outfitters

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Mike Borel
Admiring a bronze ram at
Arche's National Park in Utah



Brooks Stiltz
Perfect License Plate for you, Brooks!
"BIGRAMS"



Mike Borel
Hunter becomes dinner when
this great prehistoric crocodile is on the ticket.
At Arche's National Park in Utah.



Mike Borel
what is this, another hungry animal?
Ram stuffed animal at Arche's National Park in Utah.



Mike Borel
MASSIVE Prehistoric Crocodile, not his!

CA WSF AT THE 2023 DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP HUNTER ORIENTATION

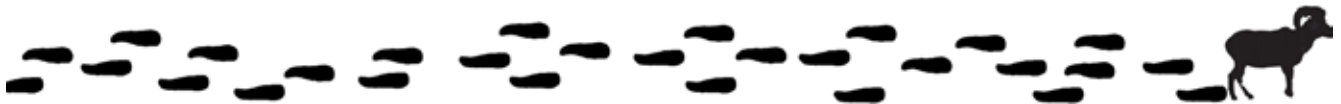
We had a roomful (52 persons) at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters on Saturday August 12. Regina Vu of CDFW was the host.

CA WSF played a major role with presentations as follows:

1. Reflections from the only CA WSF officer whose ever drawn a DBH Tag – Ken Crother
2. Preparation and Safety in the Desert – Scott Gibson
3. Where to Look and How to Spot Bighorn Sheep - George Kerr
4. Recommended Equipment - Mike Borel
5. Patriarch and Largest Ram Awards – Don Martin

Ken Crother also grilled delicious Chicken, baked Macaroni and Cheese, and tossed salads for all.

The Hunters, **AND CDFW**, were very appreciative and we are invited to make this an annual event.



Sheep Camp Corn

From Scott Gibson, Distinguished Life Member, Board Member

This is fast and easy recipe that will please everyone in your camp. The smell of sizzling bacon and onions will get everyone's attention. Group meals are used to gather volunteers together for safety briefings and project planning on bighorn sheep conservation projects.

Ingredients:

3 lb Bacon
4 lb Sweet Onion
6 lb Whole Kernal Frozen Sweet Corn
2 lb grated or crumbly cheese (Jack or Cheddar)
1 or 2 fresh limes
1 tsp coarse salt
1-2 seven oz cans of Chipotle Chiles in Adobo Sauce
1 or 2 bunches of cilantro
14 oz Squeeze Sour Cream or Mexican Crema
*Above portions feed 20 people, adjust ratios for your family or group size.

Preparation:

Dice the bacon and onions to ½" pieces then place a hot discada or large skillet. While stirring the bacon and onion, continue to cook until the onion just begins to caramelize. Add a can or two of the chipotle chiles in adoba sauce, use your metal spatula to cut the chiles to smaller pieces while you stir. Add the bags of frozen sweet corn to the bacon, onions and chiles, Continue cooking until some of the corn kernels begin to brown while stirring constantly. Add the grated cheese, squeezed lime and begin taste testing, add salt to taste. Lower the heat on the disc or skillet, add chopped cilantro for some added color then serve in cup, plate or bowl. Add a dollop of sour crème or crema fresca as a final embellishment. This dish is great served hot or can be saved and served cold as a "left over".



STATE LANDS SCOUTING EFFORT

by Steve Marschke

Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep, President

Most of you have heard by now that we received a lease from the State Lands Commission for 90 parcels on which to build Raincatcher wildlife water developments. Per the SLC Commission, our projects are small enough that we are exempt from CEQA. However, we do have to follow some "Best Management Practices" which include some on the ground inspections for sensitive species. That field work isn't particularly difficult and we have to visit the sites to make detailed sketches of the system for engineering purposes.

In June, Glenn Sudmeier and I visited five of the proposed parcels in the vicinity of Ludlow. These parcels were selected for the first effort because they were likely to be vehicle accessible and because they had been visited by Glenn on previous scouting trips, usually with John Norris or Jim Markle. I won't go into all of the details, but to sum thing up, we decided to put one parcel on the back burner for now because the access is cross-country and there are several small washes to cross, this site was deemed low priority and most likely will require a helicopter for installation. At two sites we discovered fresh tortoise signs (burrows and one live tortoise!) on the proposed rain mat area, for those two sites we hiked around until we found another suitable location within the same SLC parcel. At one of those sites, the tortoise turned out to be a blessing as the site was an extremely small bench near a dry wash. So small that we couldn't figure out how Glenn ever figured on installing a system there until he racked his brain (and notes) and realized that he and John



a small saddle that separates it from the main drainage which is an open route (until it necks down.) We found several interesting things while looking for a suitable, buildable site: more tortoise shells (none of which appeared to have been crushed by vehicles), historical mining claim cairns, railroad tie cabin, historic wheel and tire and even an old fallen weather balloon with aneroid barometer inside. Most of that area seemed to have experienced recent flash floods and the catclaws looked great: very lush, green and many with blossoms and seed pods. We found some grass in one of the washes also – in all some good forage, at least this year. Two of the sites were fine as-is. At the four sites suitable for vehicle access, we took fresh measurements and planned the exact layout of the rain mat and tanks. The next step is to run these sites through the DFW and get concurrence that they are good for bighorn (per our Best Management practices) and we will select some construction dates. We are planning to



Norris picked that site back in 2009! At that time, SCBS did not have the Raincatcher style tanks and he had planned on using a single BOSS style tank (single due to the expense.)

We hiked around the entire section (and outside it) and located a new spot. We also found a new site for the other system that had tortoise and we think that the new location will actually be a bit easier to reach for construction and yet possibly less easy for random public to chance across, there is

get three of them completed in the upcoming 2023-2024 fall and winter seasons. Stay tuned for exact dates!

Editor's note: CA WSF provides funding for these systems at approximately \$30,000 per installation. We appreciate our members contributions and, when possible, please plan to volunteer on one of the installations -- you will learn a lot and meet some new friends.

R12 LITTLE FARGO “HOT SHOTS”

IMPORTANT WATER SOURCE ADJACENT TO JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

By Scott Gibson, Distinguished Life Member, Board Member

The “Little Fargo” wildlife water development (guzzler) is located at the southern border of Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) on a piece of private property acquired by the Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT). The guzzler was originally constructed in 1997, by Desert Wildlife Unlimited (DWU) and the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS), with permission from the then landowner. Since JTNP will no longer allow maintenance of the six (6) existing bighorn sheep guzzlers located inside the park, Little Fargo has become increasingly important for the population of bighorn sheep that inhabit and traverse the Little San Bernardino Mountains as well as other desert wildlife.

The Society continues to maintain this important water source for desert bighorn sheep. Led by “Area Captains” Monte Hammer and Brian Schwab, the Society and the MDLT have now hauled water to this guzzler two times during the summer of 2021 and 2022. Rains during the 2022/23 season filled the three (3) 2000-gallon tanks, but also filled the area behind the check dam with sand. Monte and Brian were concerned that all the sand would prevent the guzzler from collecting water from upcoming rain events. Monte and Brian organized a work party, historically known as a “Hot Shot Crew”, to dig out the sand. In addition to being a land trust, the MDLT also utilizes volunteers to perform habitat conservation work.

Volunteers from both the MDLT and the Society met early on the morning of April 8, 2023 on Dillon Road near Coachella, CA. After the hour long 4x4 trek and the ½ mile hike up the canyon and dry waterfall, the volunteers shoveled the yards of sand from behind the dam. The crew finished digging at about noon as the temperature climbed to 97°F.

I arrived later, with lunch provided by the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation (CA WSF)



VERMIN WATER HAUL

By Scott Gibson, Distinguished Life Member, Board Member

The “Vermin” drinker is located on the western end of the Old Dad Mountains, within the Mojave National Preserve. This legacy water development consists of three (3) upright plastic tanks manifolded to a “New Mexico” style drinker box. Rainwater is collected in a slick rock canyon check dam and then piped to the tanks. While many areas of the Mojave desert received rain last season, the Vermin system did not collect enough water to fill completely. Neal Darby, from the National Park Service (NPS) at the Preserve, reached out earlier this spring to let us know about the dwindling water conditions. Neal and his team continued to monitor the system. As summer was approaching fast, we made the call to provision Vermin with a water haul on May 19th and 20th.



Above: Steve Marschke and David Hawxhurst filling a water tank at NPS Maintenance Yard, Baker prior to transport to the Vermin Guzzler.

Our advance volunteer crew met at Camp Cady Wildlife Area to load equipment on Friday afternoon, May 19th. Once we loaded Big Red, we convoyed to the NPS maintenance yard in Baker. There we filled our totes with water then headed to the guzzler.



Above: We worked quickly to set up the bladder tank and string as much hose as possible Friday night..

Out in the Old Dads, we set up the 3000-gallon bladder tank and discharged our truck mounted tanks to start filling it up. We also began stringing out the half mile of hose needed to reach the tanks



Above: Big Red dropping second load of water to the 3000-gallon bladder tank as the Mark 3 Wajax Water Pump begins operation..

On Saturday Morning, the main “water haul” group met back at the NPS yard in Baker. Our team consisted of volunteers from SCBS, CDFW and NPS employees. As each truck filled with water, we began making the hour long 4x4 trek to the Vermin site. Each truck discharged it’s load of water in the bladder tank then returned to Baker for a second load. When the bladder was full, we started pumping operations.

We were able to finish pumping a little after noon, a new record for us. With left over water in some of the trucks, Neal Darby led a crew to the “New Vermin” tank site less than a mile away. We rolled up the hose and loaded all equipment to depart the site by 3:00 PM.



Above: SCBS volunteers, like Dan Panattoni, had to carry all the fire hose back to the trucks.

Highlights:

- 4,275-gallons of water pumped to SB16 Vermin.
- 1,925-gallons delivered to SB67 New Vermin
- Approximately 3,300-feet of firehose used with a total weight of nearly 1,200-pounds.
- The WaterAxe pumped for 2-hrs 6-min, yielding a flow rate of ~31 gpm.
- High temperature of 102°F with a low temperature was 67°F.

GOVERNMENT ISSUES UPDATE

by Don Priest, Distinguished Life Member, Board Member

CA WSF continues to monitor a number of issues. As readers of this update, you'll know that the two current pressing matters that we are actively engaged and monitoring are the wildlife connectivity mitigation as a result of the Brightline Highspeed Rail Line and the upcoming release of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Sheep Plan for public review. In addition, recently an Air Shasta and CDFW helicopter tragically collided, resulting in the death of the Air Shasta pilot. Air Shasta holds the contract with CDFW for wildlife population survey work, which may now effect the sheep surveys that were scheduled for this fall.

Please stay tuned and look to our next edition of this newsletter for updates on these issues and others, including on a number of National Monument proposals, as they develop further over the course of the next few months.



LATE BREAKING NEWS - WCB FUNDS I-8 WILDLIFE CROSSING

At the Wildlife Conservation Board Meeting on August 24, 2023 the Board approved \$5,808,000 for the I-8 Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Crossing Planning (Project) is located along the portion of Interstate-8 (I-8) where the eastbound and westbound lanes are separated, forming an isolated island of mountainous desert habitat in an area known as In-Ko-Pah Gorge in western Imperial County near the border with San Diego County.

The Project will focus on a section of I-8 that runs through the In-Ko-Pah Gorge and bisects important habitat used as a movement corridor by endangered Peninsular Bighorn Sheep and other wildlife.

The Project was submitted by University of California, Davis with support from Wildlands Network and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers.





CALIFORNIA FISH AND WILDLIFE UPDATE AND WHITE MOUNTAIN SURVEY

*by Rick Ianniello, CDFW
Desert Bighorn Biologist Region 6*

At 6am, August 8th, it was 72 degrees in Bishop. At 11,700ft in the Whites, it was below freezing. Lucky to be on official business, we drove past Barcroft Gate to the last turnaround before a giant snowfield below White Mountain Peak. Dr. John Wehausen and our newly hired drought scientist Ben Carter took the vehicles south to survey along White Mountain Road. Our group of five headed north, with three days to survey before the next round of forecasted thunderstorms.

Almost immediately, a group of twelve ewes, yearlings, and lambs rounded a ridge and bedded below us, unconcerned with our presence. These “switch-back sheep” are habituated to human traffic on California’s third highest peak, and I suspect they use the area as a semi-refuge from mountain lions that prefer to keep their distance from hikers, bicycles, and trucks.

From there we took our packs, loaded with food, cold weather gear, spotting scopes, tripods, binoculars, and telemetry equipment north across the Knife’s Edge: the only narrowing of the White Mountain’s Crest between Mount Dubois and Westgard Pass. We scrambled along its top for half an hour, before reaching a narrow ledge that cuts over a fifty-foot precipice. Passing our bags between each other allowed us to traverse the exposed spot unencumbered, and solid foot and handholds made the traverse manageable.

The White Mountains hold many sheep, but even more terrain to glass. By 8pm, when we reached our campsite at Birch Creek Saddle, exhausted, we had seen no more sheep than the dozen switch-back sheep. What we saw was endless green, along the crest, in the flats to the east, and off the steep disappearing slopes to the west. In a typical summer, the Whites are drying up by mid-August, and though forage is still available, it’s limited to the high flats where sheep are easy to count. But this year wasn’t normal. The only slopes uncovered by green grass and bright flowers were



Rick Ianniello, CDFW

the steep eastern slopes, still half coated white by old cornices and snowfields from the historic winter.

Our luck fared better in the second half of the survey and combined with a group of 14 that John and Ben saw, we counted 72 desert bighorn this year in the Whites. While in previous years we counted over 200 sheep on this survey, widespread green-up is better for sheep than for count. With steep, difficult terrain, covered in grasses and flowers, we expect many bighorn sheep grazed tucked away in steep canyons off the west side. In fact, the 14 rams we counted were doing just that. We only spotted them after descending 2,000 feet down the side to retrieve an old collar! So, wish some luck to the White Mountain hunters this year. They may need it!



Sheep and snow off the side of the Whites
(photo by Shelton Hatfield)



Ana Solberg glassing from White Mountain Peak (photo by Shelton Hatfield)



Pellissier Flats (photo by Ana Solberg)



Danielle Glass traversing the Knife's Edge. (photo by Ana Solberg)

The sheep were fat and healthy, with many yearlings and lambs. Given the abundant low elevation, west facing habitat available to the White Mountain Sheep, it's unlikely the big winter had much negative effect. However, the GPS collars we used in 2018-2020 to estimate the population as one of the biggest in the state at around 400 sheep have all failed, making such an estimate impossible this year. This fall, we plan on adding another 24 collars to the range for future estimates and continued monitoring.

In other news, we conducted our first in person hunter orientation in four years on Saturday, August 12th! We'd like

to extend a huge thanks to the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep and California Wild Sheep Foundation for presenting and providing lunch.

In addition to our new drought scientist, Ben Carter, we have two additional scientific aides, Riley Johnson and Samantha Stelton, who will be helping us collect the nearly 100 cameras we deployed over the summer, and to prepare for this fall's captures in the White Mountains and surrounding northern ranges.

2021-22 ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE SIERRA NEVADA BIGHORN SHEEP RECOVERY PROGRAM

*by Thomas R. Stephenson, PHD, CDFW
Certified Wildlife Biologist®, IDR Sierra Wildlife Supervisor and
Program Leader for Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Recovery*

Editor's Note: Below is a summary of the recently released 2021-22 Annual Report for the Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Recovery Program. This report shows a very positive view of the sheep from 21-22 but as we know last winter about 50% of the SNBH died.

We published a rigorous evaluation of disease risk to Sierra bighorn. This new method considers the likelihood of Sierra bighorn movements when identifying potential overlap between Sierra bighorn and domestic sheep.

Excerpts from the report:

For the second consecutive year, the range-wide Sierra bighorn population increased, reaching 277 females. Although still short of the highest count of 316 females in 2016, the growth of most herds this year indicates a rebound from the heavy winters of 2016-17 and 2018-19.

In addition to summer surveys, we were able to have both spring and fall bighorn captures. In the spring, we successfully translocated 7 bighorn from Baxter to Laurel including 4 females, 3 of which were pregnant.

In the eastern Sierra region, we accounted for 55 mountain lions which exceeds the highest count from last year of 54. This includes the highest counts ever for three of the four count areas: northern, central, and Olancha.



*Sierra Nevada ram
Photo courtesy of Josh Schulgen, Sierra Crest Outfitters*

KINGSTON RANGE AND CLARK MOUNTAIN: A BRIEF HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA'S THIRD BIGHORN SHEEP HUNT ZONE (PART I)

by Vernon C. Bleich, Ph.D.

California's third bighorn sheep hunt zone was approved by the Fish and Game Commission during the Spring of 1992. In 1971, when Dick Weaver and John Hall conducted the first in-depth survey for bighorn sheep in the Kingston, Clark, and Nopah ranges, they estimated a total of 80 animals for that area. They also suggested that transient bighorn sheep occasionally occupied the Resting Springs Range, located just north of the Nopah Range in southeastern Inyo County.

Relative to other parts of California, Weaver and Hall expended only a small amount of effort investigating the status of bighorn sheep in this region, and the report produced is among the shortest of the 14 that resulted from the statewide survey that was authorized by the State Legislature and took place during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Indeed, Dick Weaver and John Hall limited their work in this region to the summer, spring, and fall of 1971.

Despite the brevity of this investigation, useful information was obtained and recommendations to enhance habitat conditions for bighorn sheep were forthcoming from that work. Among those recommendations were reducing human activity associated with mining in the north end of the Kingston Range, to reduce the population of feral donkeys that occupied the area and thereby competed with sheep for forage and water, and to modify grazing permits for the same reason. Weaver and Hall considered the entire area is deficient in water, and recommendations to construct several water developments also were included.

As a result of the report by Weaver and Hall, the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) worked cooperatively with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to construct a water development near Porcupine Tank in the northwest portion of the Kingston Range; that project occurred on 9 October 1976. This location was based on the work of Weaver and Hall, which was published in 1971 and on earlier information contained in a CDFG report prepared by Floyd Vernoy and Bert Craig in 1959, well before Weaver and Hall initiated their investigation. Together, those two reports precipitated the construction not only at Porcupine Tank, but additional water developments in the Nopah, Kingston, and Clark ranges.

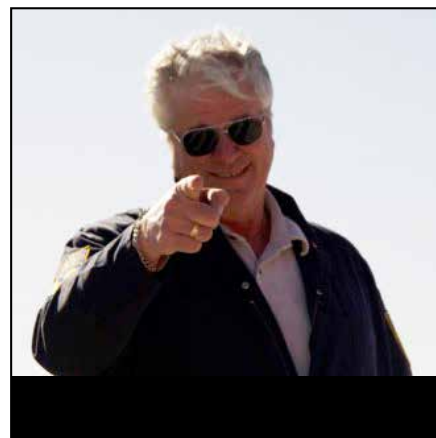
A second water development was constructed in the Clark Mountain Range on 7 May 1977, and once again it was a

cooperative effort between CDFG, SCBS, and BLM. That catchment is located on the north-facing slope of the Clark Mountain Range immediately south of Mesquite Dry Lake, and again was selected based on the recommendations of Weaver and Hall, and those of Vernoy and Craig.

Another development was built 6 June 1987 on the north side of Clark Mountain, near the site of a helicopter crash that took the lives of BLM Biologist Jim Bicket and Helicopter Pilot Don Landells, and honors those individuals and their contributions to the conservation of bighorn sheep in California.

Three additional developments have been constructed in the Nopah Range, all of which were carried out cooperatively by CDFG, SCBS, and BLM. The first was built in the central portion of the range on 12 March 1977, the second was built on 20 March 1982 in the extreme north end of the Nopah Range, and the third was constructed on 23 April 1983 in the extreme south end of the Nopah Range. Notably, the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep funded construction of the latter catchment. Although these three catchments are located outside of the Kingston-Clark Hunt Zone, they have provided year-round sources of water for bighorn sheep in a mountain range that has no other permanent sources. Nevertheless, they are located in a mountain range that, along with other mountain ranges in the area, support a metapopulation of bighorn sheep occupying the eastern Mojave Desert in southern Nevada and eastern California. Bighorn sheep occupying the Kingston and Clark ranges also are part of that metapopulation of bighorn sheep, and those two ranges and the Mesquite Mountains are located in the Kingston-Clark Hunt Zone.

These water developments, maintenance of the few existing natural springs, modification of grazing permits, and enhanced management of feral donkeys have had a positive effect on the number of bighorn sheep inhabiting the Clark, Kingston, and Mesquite ranges by increasing habitat



quality and decreasing competition. In part, these habitat improvements, changes in management, and decreases in competition have contributed to more bighorn sheep in the Kingston-Clark Hunt Zone, as well as nearby mountain ranges, as evidenced by the latest available size categories to which these populations have been assigned. In Part II of this essay, I will describe some background information on the demographic investigations of bighorn sheep in this area, and the role they played in establishing California's third bighorn sheep hunt zone.

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This article is part of a series by Dr. Vern Bleich, who increasingly is concerned that many aspects of the history and management of bighorn sheep in California are being lost as a consequence of a loss of 'corporate memory', or what has been termed by others as an increase in 'generational amnesia'. That history is long and complex, and at times has been misinterpreted, or even wrongly conveyed to others, by those not having a direct connection to the past. Vern was employed by the California Department of Fish and Game for 34 years, during which he worked extensively with large mammals occupying the Great Basin, Mojave, and Sonoran deserts of California and, in particular, desert bighorn sheep. He was fortunate to have joined the Department shortly after completion of a thorough inventory of bighorn sheep in California, and has remained active in the conservation and management of that species since 1973. He currently is Research Professor at the University of Nevada Reno, serves on the Advisory Board of the Texas Bighorn Society, is Science Advisor for the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep, serves on two committees of the California Wild Sheep Foundation, and is a member of the Wild Sheep Foundation's Professional Resource Advisory Board. He represented wildlife conservation and management on the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board from 2019 to 2022. Parties interested in material presented in this article can contact Vern directly (vcbleich@gmail.com).



FAVORITE GEAR: ILLUMINATED RETICLES

by Bob Keagy, Distinguished Life Member

The trophy Nyala bull was standing in heavy vegetation at last light, and appeared as a black silhouette as the light visibly faded. It was now or never! I tried to find the black cross hairs in my .458- it was black on black amongst black - no luck! I then turned on my (then) brand-new illuminated reticle Leupold, the glowing dot instantly told me where the crosshairs were, and I placed them over the black silhouette's heart/lung area, and fired. The nayla bull collapsed instantly. It has been many years since I hunted in the Mkuze Falls area of northern South Africa, near the Mozambique border, but I still remember this, my first field usage of an illuminated reticle scope.

Since then, I have replaced most of my rifle scopes with illuminated reticle models.

Illuminated reticle scopes are more expensive, but I believe that the advantages far outweigh the extra couple of hundred bucks for this feature. An illuminated reticle extends the "golden hour" at day's end, and gives you fifteen to twenty minutes additional hunting time, crucially when animals are most moving about. Shooting a black buffalo at first light, I placed the glowing red dot against the mass of the shoulder. I also find the glowing pinpoint even in broad daylight wonderfully increases my visual concentration. Further, It adds nothing to the weight of my gun case to throw a couple of spare 2032 batteries in before closing it up.

In my personal experience, though, there are certain "do's" and "don'ts" with regard to illuminated reticles. Firstly, it is possible to over-do them. Turning your illumination up to full power can blank out a target against a darkened background. Although this is purely personal, I seldom set the illumination at over half-power, and tend to start the setting on a new illuminated scope at about there. Similarly, I personally tend to find overly complex illuminations distracting. I do not favor a "Boone and Crockett" illuminated reticle, nor one of the fancy "windage" calculating reticles, as again, these fancy reticles with their many stadia lines tend, for me at least, to obscure an already challenging target. I go for the small red glowing dot or the simple illuminated crosshairs, and I try to avoid anything more complex. Again, these are purely personal observations.

I hope this is of interest.



One of Bob's Cape Buffalo (Tanzania 2019) shows Bob holding his .416 Rigby with the battery turret over the ocular lens casing of the scope. Clearly an illuminated scope.

Not to mention, look at that buff!

SKY VALLEY ECOLOGICAL RESERVE DRINKER REPAIRS WITH QUAIL FOREVER

By Scott Gibson, Distinguished Life Member, Board Member

There is a small game guzzler located just outside the southern boundary of Joshua Tree National Park, north of Indio and east of Desert Hot Springs. The guzzler had suffered some damage and needed repair. This guzzler is important for sheep, as Joshua Tree National Park will not allow maintenance on the six (6) existing guzzlers within the park. On March 18th, 2023, our group of volunteers from Quail Forever and the Society met at the Sky Valley Ecological Reserve. We all got to work immediately removing the steel rain collection and digging out the tank. We brought pumps, hose, and tanks to save the existing water in the 750-gallon fiberglass drinker. After we re-set the drinker tank and replaced the steel rain collector, we re-filled the drinker with the saved water and added fresh water we trucked in. We verified the remote drinker box was functioning. Then we celebrated completion of the guzzler with hamburgers sponsored by the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation.



Tank and metal removed by SGQF/SCBS volunteers



SGQF/SCBS Member Monte Hammer with tanks of water



Bob Jewell helping with the burger on the "discada"



Thank you to the volunteers from San Gabriel Chapter of Quail Forever and from SCBS for completing this project

2022 GREENLAND MUSKOX ADVENTURE

By John Ware, Distinguished Life Member

Getting to Greenland is unusual. You would think it would be simply fly north and east from California. However, to get into Greenland you need to go through Denmark. So we had to fly south and west before going north and east.

The flight was long and we didn't have our checked bags for the first day in Denmark but they did arrive in time for our onward flight to Greenland.

Along with fellow hunter Tom Mattusch from San Francisco, we flew into Kangerlussuaq ("the long fjord"), a small town in south west of Greenland full of brightly painted boxy buildings, traditional for the area. The Inuit Outfitters camp was founded in 1996 and placed in the heart of the hunting area for muskox. Our hosts/guides were Michael and Julie plus four other Greenland natives.

We met our guides as we came off the airplane and into the airport. We also met the other people who would be in camp: Randy from Michigan, and Saylito from Hungary. The airport was small with only a few gates. After gathering our bags we went for a short walk to a local grocery store to buy drinks and other specialty items we might want, and then all went to one small hotel room to "gear up" for the 20KM, ~2hour ATV ride out into the interior of Greenland. We were promised cold and wind chill, and we certainly got it. I was the only one too dumb to put on long johns so got a bit chilly on the ride.

The ride was fun, interesting, exciting, and COLD! The terrain was patchy snow and iced-over braided rivers and lakes. We were clearly traveling established trails. At some points it looked as though the ground was passable, but on looking more carefully you could see that the bare ground was made up of rocks of all sizes — and would be very uncomfortable to ride on. At first we saw glimpses of glaciers, but soon enough a glacial backdrop was common place. The entire center of Greenland is one massive glacier field so they are really unavoidable.

When we arrived at the camp we were pleasantly surprised — the hunter cabin was very well built and insulated with a modern oil heater that kept it quite warm. There was also a "bag" toilet that Julie told us would be emptied every morning. There were four sleeping rooms with two bunk beds each so that eight was the maximum number of hunters at once. There was also a large table in the center area where the 'guys' could have drinks at night. We each got our gear into the rooms assigned and then walked to the next cabin, which was the meals and guides cabin. We had a light lunch while Julie and Michael explained the most important aspects of the stay at the cabins and the hunting. Then Michael teamed us each up with one of the guides/ATV drivers and we were ready to go hunt!



Local supply store within walking distance of the airport



Traveling the "ice road" from town to camp, part of the 'long fjord'



Hunter cabin on the lake



My muskox down on first hunting day

The hunting was conducted with a hunting passenger riding behind a guide on one of multiple ATVs. Tom, Beverly, and I went with one group of guides, and Randy and Saylito went with the other group. We stuck with those divisions for the entire hunt. All the ATVs would leave camp at the same time, each group heading in a separate direction as pre-arranged by the guides and depending on what the hunters were looking for — Beverly wanted an old muskox, Tom wanted a large record book one, etc.

That afternoon Tom got his muskox within a few hours of starting the hunt, and I got mine a half hour later out of the same herd.

This was after a very long stalk up a mountain side and around the hills to keep from being seen by the muskox while keeping them in sight. Once the hunters closed in the herd did spook a bit and started moving. Tom took a shot at a moving muskox and hit one who conveniently stopped and fell where he was. There was the usual guide to hunter discussion before the shot about which one. The guides used the condition of the hide on the muskox to judge age, if it was old it wouldn't groom itself rubbing against rocks, so wool would accumulate along the back.

There was another good muskox in the group so we followed the herd around the back side of the hill where I was able to take a shot after another 15 minutes of stalking. The shot placement wasn't perfect so a follow on pursuit and several false setups were required. The first follow up attempt was a dry-fire. The crew had a strict policy of not allowing hunters to manage the weapon, literally taking it off the shooting sticks between shots and cycling the bolt rather than letting the hunter handle it. No doubt from previous bad experiences, or perhaps the extreme cold made chambering more difficult for some past hunters. However in this case, the "gun caddy" failed his job, and didn't fully cycle the bolt so no new shell was inserted. Finally the bull laid down and was left by the rest of the herd. At that point I got in position and made a close finishing shot when the bull stood for the final time. In all cases the herd would only move 50 to 100 yards from the fallen animal, often sticking around unconcerned for their safety.

Then we had two muskox down. There was work to do — cleaning and skinning. We requested meat be taken from their muskox for meals. Back straps and tenderloins, and hearts. As it turned out both muskox had been heart-shot, so that was out, but there was basically a tacit refusal to harvest any meat from either of the bulls. None of the meat from any muskox made it back to camp. Beverly hypothesized that they are not equipped for certain kinds of cooking.

We headed back to the camp but on the way... we were stopped at the bottom of the hillside. We were waiting for the other two hunters with their ATVs to catch up. Michael pointed out some ptarmigan and I was able to get two that night.



Ptarmigan were plentiful

As we were leaving the meal cabin that night we had the great opportunity to see beautiful northern lights. It was incredible and we actually saw them two nights in a row.



Northern Lights over the camp site

The cabin beds were surprisingly comfortable and appointed with nice duvets which were plenty warm. After a pretty good night's sleep (based on all the snoring heard in the cabin) our second day of hunting began. We got ready, had breakfast and took off on the ice rivers again. The group split up the same as the day before. Today the focus was on an old

bull for Beverly and the same for Saylito.

We took the long way around to the back side of the cabin area and along the way we were on the lookout for muskox. We saw a herd at one end of a long lake — they were at the top of a somewhat lower mountain. We took the ATVs up the back side out of their sight and hearing, dismounting and continuing until we were able to find them on foot. Beverly and Michael were in the lead. Just as we got to the top of the second rise the muskox were there within 50 yards or less — they had moved up the mountain quite a bit. We quickly ducked down to stay out of sight and retreated a short distance behind a knoll so that we would not spook them. After confirming with Michael that the quality was good, the bull was old, and it was the ONE facing right (reconfirmed many many times!) the decision was made. Quietly and quickly Beverly was ready to shoot. A good first shot with the .300 Win Mag followed by an insurance shot made sure the bull was not going anywhere. The rest of the herd headed off and we got to work. That is, Michael and Yon got busy skinning and cleaning.



Beverly's muskox with ice cap in the background (Guide Michael far right)

With muskox trophy in tow, we headed back to the camp. We had a light lunch and then went to the hunters cabin. Very shortly Michael came over and said he saw a fox on the lake — Tom and I were both hoping to get a fox so off we went. Tom took about 10 shots at one that kept running up the hillside until it was out of sight.

Then I went with Tom looking for a caribou. He wanted a male even if without antlers so that he could add one more animal for his North American hunt records. There had been some discussion and Tom had to confirm with Safari Club International (SCI) National that this caribou would qualify as "North American Introduced" despite being in Greenland. It only took a couple of hours to find one that Tom shot. Randy and Saylito also got in shortly afterwards. Randy had gotten his second muskox, a bigger trophy, and Saylito got his first.

On the third hunting day everyone was interested in fox, rabbits, and ptarmigan. At the last minute Beverly said she wanted a caribou. She would be happy with a caribou cow, which would still have antlers but much smaller than a mature bull in season. So our group went looking for caribou as well as the smaller animals. As usual we were traveling on

the ATVs on icy lakes and rivers while looking for game on the mountains. We came upon a group of four or five caribou and Michael and Beverly started stalking them. The herd moved and the hunters followed. They moved again, followed again. Beverly took a shot but 350 yds or more was too much and the herd kept moving up hill. Nooka came with an ATV, picked up Beverly and tried to get in front of the herd but it was no luck, they were up and over the mountains.

The hunting group got back together and went looking around the side of the mountain where those caribou might have gone but instead found two other caribou, far below near a frozen lake. Michael saw one that looked very good so he and Beverly started the stalk again. The rest stayed back and the stalk took some time, as care had to be taken not to be sky-lined to the caribou. And then they started moving, requiring additional repositioning and descending down into the bowl surrounding the lake.

A first shot at about 300 yards down and across the frozen lake and he was hit but not down. They got down the mountain and across the lake in great time — Michael commented that Beverly was moving so fast he had to almost run to keep up. One last shot and caribou was down.



Beverly's out of season caribou; expected a female but it was a young male

After taking care of the caribou everyone is on the way back to camp knowing this is the last chance at anything. We had seen a rabbit on the farther side of the lake and Tom went with one of the guides to see if he could get it. They ended up walking the entire mountain as we watched the rabbit stay in front of them and ultimately go over the top of the mountain before they turned around. This was all quite entertaining for those watching from a reclining position in a snow drift.

We were all packed and ready to take the long (cold) ride back to the airport the next morning at 8am.

At the airport we got out of the extra clothes and ready to be certified again. Julie made sure we were all checked in and our bags were loaded then she needed to get ready for the next group of hunters.

THE POLITICS OF CONSERVATION

KEEPING SHEEP ON THE MOUNTAIN AND YOU IN THE FIELD

By Bill Gaines, Gaines and Associates

It's hard to believe that it is already late August. Summer has flown by, kids are already back in school, hunting seasons are rapidly approaching, and the leaves will soon start changing. But the one thing that never changes is the pace of the "politics of conservation" – the non-stop activity in a variety of political arenas that drives our ability to promote the health of our wild sheep and the opportunity to pursue them on the mountain.

Following their annual one-month summer recess, Legislators returned to the State Capitol on August 14th recharged and ready to tackle the frantic final five weeks of the 2023 Session – the first year of the two-year 2023/2024 Legislative Session. While some bills of interest to CA WSF have perished, others have been tabled until the 2024 Session, and several bills of concern are still in play.

Below is a summary of just some of the issues the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation (CA WSF) is currently working in our State Legislature on behalf of our wild sheep and our members.

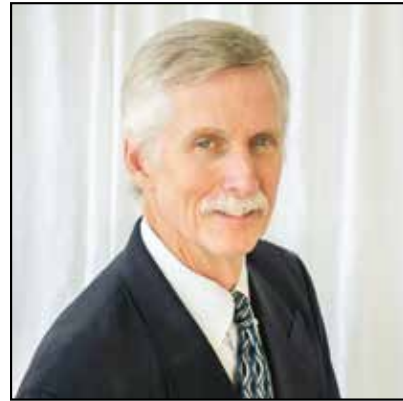
AB 28 (Gabriel) – Firearms and Ammunition: Excise Tax

Without question, the bill currently of greatest concern to the conservation community is AB 28 – yet another "do-over" of legislation simply intended to try to price law-abiding Californians out of the guns and ammunition market. Lawmakers have tried no less than six times in the last ten years to place an additional tax on the sale of guns and ammunition. Most recently, during the 2021 Legislative Session, and again in the 2022 Session, CA WSF and our close partners in conservation teamed up to defeat AB 1223 and AB 1227, respectively.

As reported in the Summer 2023 Issue of California Wild Sheep, this Session's version is AB 28 by Assembly Member Jesse Gabriel (D/46-Woodland Hills) – legislation which would impose an 11% excise tax on the retail sale of all firearms, firearm parts, and ammunition. Coined the "Gun Violence Prevention, Healing, and Recovery Act," AB 28 would require that the revenues collected from those who lawfully purchase, and use firearms be deposited in an account used to fund programs which address illegal gun use.

Implementing successful programs for addressing criminal gun violence is something which benefits all Californians, and something that all Californians should equally help fund. However, under AB 28 these programs would be fully funded only by citizens who legally purchase and lawfully use firearms.

As most of you are aware, hunters and shooters already pay an 11% excise tax on long guns, ammunition, archery, and other hunting equipment, and a 10% excise tax on handguns pursuant to federal Pittman-Robertson Act. But those dollars are appropriately allocated back to the states to fund positive programs – including wildlife habitat projects, hunter safety classes and shooting/target ranges. The California



Department of Fish and Wildlife currently receives \$30+ million annually in federal PR funding for these purposes. The hunting community not only supports this tax because of the positive programs it funds, we initiated it. (See a Brief History of the Pittman-Robertson Act below).

As reported in our Summer 2023 issue, despite our active opposition, AB 28 easily passed through three Assembly committees. AB 28 has since passed off the Assembly Floor in late May via a 56 – 17 vote and over to the Senate.

Maintaining its momentum on the Senate side, AB 28 quickly moved through two policy committees on lopsided party-line votes before summer recess. On August 14th – the first day of Capitol business following the recess – AB 28 was briefly heard in Senate fiscal committee and parked in the suspense file to be taken up at a later hearing. Although we are doing all possible to kill this terrible bill in Senate fiscal committee, we expect AB 28 to be heard and passed out of committee before the end of August. Knowing our best chance to defeat this bill is on the Senate Floor where it will require a 2/3rds majority, CA WSF has been actively working with our conservation partners to secure the necessary 14 Senate Floor votes to kill the bill. With only 8 Republicans in the 40 seat California State Senate, we have our work cut out for us.

AB 28 must be heard and passed out of Senate fiscal committee by September 1st to remain viable during the 2023 Session. Should the bill pass out of Senate fiscal committee by that deadline, it can come up for a vote on the Senate Floor anytime prior to the close of the 2023 Session at the end of business on September 14th.

AB 574 (Jones-Sawyer) – Firearms: Dealer Records of Sale

As reported in our Summer 2023 issue, current law requires any sale, loan, or transfer of a gun be conducted through a licensed firearm dealer. Further, law requires that the dealer maintain a record of each transaction which includes information about the purchaser, the firearm, and the eligibility of the purchaser or transferee to own or possess a firearm.

As amended March 9, 2023, AB 574 by Assembly Member Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer (D/57-Los Angeles) would additionally require the dealer record to include the acknowledgment by the purchaser or transferee that they have, within the past 30 days, confirmed possession of every firearm that they own or possess.

AB 574 passed out of Assembly policy committee in April, through Assembly fiscal committee in mid-May, and off the Assembly Floor two weeks later – largely via party-line votes. Once on the Senate side, AB 574 easily passed through Senate policy committee just prior to recess.

AB 574 was heard in Senate fiscal committee on August 14th and parked in the suspense file to be taken up at a later hearing. AB 574 must be pulled from suspense, heard, and passed out of the Senate fiscal committee to the Senate Floor by September 1st to meet legislative deadline and remain viable for the 2023 Session.

AB 1587 (Ting) – Financial Transactions: Firearms Merchants: Merchant Category Code A “gut and amend”, as amended August 14, 2023, AB 1587 by Assembly Member Philip Ting (D/19-San Francisco) would, by July 1, 2024, require banks and credit card companies to establish a separate new merchant category code (MCC) to apply to “firearms merchants”. AB 1587 defines “firearms merchants” as “businesses licensed in California as a firearms dealer or ammunition vendor for which the highest sales value is, or is expected to be, from the combined sale in California of firearms, firearm accessories, or ammunition”. Currently, firearm sellers and manufacturers are typically categorized as either “sporting goods” or “other.” AB 1587 would require the new MCC to be in use beginning May 1, 2025.

Proponents argue that the intent of AB 1587 is to create a new tool that would allow financial institutions to identify and report to law enforcement suspicious activity by identifying patterns that are suggestive of illegal firearm trafficking. However, the separate MCC that AB 1587 would require would capture all transactions at firearms-related “sporting goods” businesses – meaning, for example, that a customer who uses their credit or debit card to purchase a baseball glove and a bat is going to have that purchase identified as “firearms-related”. That very point was highlighted by VISA’s Chief Communications Officer K.C. Kavanagh in February 2023 who stated that if one person goes into a gun store and purchases a tent and another customer purchases a rifle and five rounds of ammunition, all VISA knows is the two customers went to the same store, but they have no way to know what they purchased.

It is our opinion that the separate firearms MCC is highly unlikely to provide the State with any additional information about gun purchases that it does not already receive through other means. Rather, by classifying all purchases made with a card at a “firearms merchant” – regardless of content – as “firearms related”, AB 1587 will simply dilute and confuse the data already be gathered on actual firearms purchased via other existing means. By blurring current data collection, it appears that the only additional product that AB 1587 would generate would be to steer enforcement off the path of real criminals and instead place many law-abiding citizens in

unwarranted jeopardy.

Lastly, AB 1587 would give the Department of Justice (DOJ) the sole authority to enforce the requirements it places on payment card networks and merchant acquirers. Fact is that DOJ staff is already so far overburdened by California’s out-of-control gun control laws that “10 day” background checks are taking far longer than 10 days, and many other firearm-related duties are not getting done.

As originally introduced, AB 1587 dealt with the reporting on the use of funds appropriated to the Multifamily Housing Program administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development. As previously written, AB 1587 easily passed through the Assembly and over to the Senate before the end of May.

Following AB 1587 being “gutted and amended” on the Senate side in June, AB 1587 passed through two Senate policy committees in July on party-line votes.

Next, AB 1587 should have been heard in Senate policy committee. But – regardless of the extensive duties it would place upon DOJ – the bill was deemed to not be of significant expense to the state nor cause a significant reduction in state revenues and bypassed Senate fiscal committee. As of late August, AB 1587 resides on the Senate Floor and can be brought up for a vote on the Senate Floor at any time prior to the close of the 2023 Session on September 14th.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PITTMAN-ROBERTSON ACT

It was hunters in the field in the early 20th Century who first noticed many species of wildlife were in serious peril largely due to the escalating destruction of their habitats. We knew something had to be done to stem the decline of our wildlife habitats, protect those which remained, and begin to restore some of what had been lost. In response, it was the hunting community that urged Congress to introduce legislation which would generate the considerable annual funding stream needed to address our wildlife and habitat concerns. The result was our nation’s first “environmental” legislation – the Pittman-Robertson Act (PR). Named after its sponsors, Key Pittman of Nevada in the Senate and Absalom Willis Robertson of Virginia in the House, the act was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt on September 2, 1937, and became effective on July 1 of 1938.

PR redirected a preexisting 11% excise tax on firearms and ammunition that had been going into the U.S. Treasury and instead allocated it to the Department of the Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The act required that the revenues be distributed to the states the following year to fund wildlife research, management, and habitat protection based on a formula that considers the area of the state and its number of licensed hunters.

In 1970, amendments to PR added an 11% tax on archery equipment and redirected an existing 10% tax on handguns that had been going to the U.S. Treasury to the FWS. The amendments required that a portion of the new tax revenues be used to educate and train hunters by the creation and maintenance of hunter safety classes and shooting/target ranges.

Since its creation almost 90 years ago, PR has provided over \$20 billion to the states and territories to protect and promote our wildlife, their habitats, and the future of hunting and shooting. PR is credited with saving many species from peril – including white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, and wood ducks – just to name a few.

The Pittman–Robertson Act was so successful that in the 1950s, a similar act was written for the protection of fish species. This act was titled the Federal Aid in Sports Fish Restoration Act. As with its wildlife counterpart, the name of this act is generally shortened by reducing it to the names of those who sponsored it, and so it is generally referred to as the Dingell–Johnson Act,



THE BUFFETT RULE

Editor's note:

This is a fabrication from the internet but sometimes they are fun to read!

In 2011 Warren Buffett did say he could end the deficit by passing "a law that says anytime there is a deficit of more than 3% of GDP, all sitting members of Congress are ineligible for re-election."

What is further shown as the "Congressional Reform Act of 2017" began circulating on the Internet in October 2009 as the "Congressional Reform Act of 2009." And it resurfaces every few years as people become more troubled by the policies of the day.

Warren Buffett, in a recent interview with CNBC, offers one of the best quotes about the debt ceiling:

"I could end the deficit in five minutes," he told CNBC. "You just pass a law that says that anytime there is a deficit of more than 3% of GDP, all sitting members of Congress are ineligible for re-election".

The 26th Amendment (granting the right to vote for 18 year-olds) took only three months and eight days to be ratified! Why? Simple! The people demanded it. That was in 1971 - before computers, e-mail, cell phones, etc.

Of the 27 amendments to the Constitution, seven (7) took one (1) year or less to become the law of the land - all because of public pressure.

Let's see if these folks (politicians) understand what people pressure is all about!

Salary of retired US Presidents \$180,000 FOR LIFE.

Salary of House/Senate members \$174,000 FOR LIFE. This is stupid

Salary of Speaker of the House \$223,500 FOR LIFE. This is really stupid

Salary of Majority / Minority Leaders \$193,400 FOR LIFE. Stupid

Average Salary of a teacher\$40,065

Average Salary of a deployed Soldier \$38,000

Here's where the cuts should be made!

Congressional Reform Act of 2017

1. No Tenure / No Pension. A Congressman / woman collects a salary while in office and receives no pay when they're out of office.

2. Congress (past, present, & future) participates in Social Security.

All funds in the Congressional retirement fund move to the Social Security system immediately. All future funds flow into the Social Security system, and Congress participates with the American people. It may not be used for any other purpose.

3. Congress can purchase their own retirement plan, just as all Americans do.

4. Congress will no longer vote themselves a pay raise. Congressional pay will rise by the lower of CPI or 3%.

5. Congress loses their current health care system and participates in the same health care system as the American people.

6. Congress must equally abide by all laws they impose on the American people.

7. All contracts with past and present Congressmen/women are void effective 3/1/17. The American people did not make this contract with Congressmen/women.

Congress made all these contracts for themselves. Serving in Congress is an honor, not a career. The Founding Fathers envisioned citizen legislators, so ours should serve their term(s), then go home and go back to work.



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