



# California Wild Sheep

Summer 2014



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Left: Robert Charkowicz, largest ram taken by a member - 177 1/8

Right top: Nick Simpson, tied for oldest ram taken by a member - 11+

Right bottom: Bob Ybright, tied for oldest ram taken by a member - 11+



## ULTIMA THULE LODGE

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# From the Editor's Desk

I hope everyone is having a good summer 2014. We have lots of material in this issue, including a couple of the hunt stories from the recent season. We also have hunt pictures from the recent season, and I am sure to get more stories to go with those pictures this summer and fall.

When looking at the rams taken in the Old Dad Mountain unit, keep in mind these are probably some of the last rams to be taken out of the unit for a very long time. The Old Dads were hit very hard by pneumonia outbreak, and despite the efforts of Fish and Wildlife, biologists, and other volunteers' efforts, many animals were lost. It was sad to see that happen last year, but its good to know there are so many people willing to step up and help ... for the sheep ... during a crisis.



Speaking of people willing to step up and help the sheep, I want to personally congratulate and thank Terry Anderson for his award and recognition at the Reno Sheep Show. See pictures on page 23. **Terry was recognized with a Outstanding Achievement Award** for his "outstanding contributions and his tireless and selfless efforts to support and enhance the habitat and desert bighorn sheep resource in California." I have known of Terry since I first started putting in for a ram tag in 1999. When I finally drew a tag in 2011, Terry was the outfitter for my Old Dad hunt. I got my ram sure enough, but it has been after the hunt that I have really gotten to know Terry. Since 2011 I have known him to work day and night taking care of the sheep. I have accompanied him on a few sheep water projects, and recently I accompanied him on a scouting mission when the Old Dad outbreak occurred. In this time spent with Terry Anderson, I can tell you no one works harder for the sheep, and he will be instrumental in re-building the populations going forward. Congrats Terry, you deserve it!

A final note and a correction. Due to an email mix up, we owe a big apology to Robert Charkowitz. We got our cover picture wrong for our last issue, and for that we are truly sorry. That was Robert's ram on our cover last issue, but it was a picture of his guide, CA WSF Life Member, Brooks Stiltz, of Dry Creek Outfitters. Sorry Robert ... and Brooks. We have your story in this issue on page 12, and we have the cover picture correct this time.

Good luck in the final hunt draws, and have a great summer hopefully getting ready for any hunts that you may have planned. Please email me or call with hunt stories, pictures, and/or ideas for newsletter content.

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Please email all articles and photos to  
rdeltoro3@cox.net.

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

# Events

|             |                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| June 27     | Chapter & Affiliates Meeting, Phoenix |
| July 8      | Board Meeting                         |
| September 9 | Board Meeting                         |
| October     | Sheep Summit XVI                      |
| November 14 | Board Meeting                         |

## 2015

|               |                                   |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| January 7-10  | The Sheep Show, Reno              |
| January 21-24 | GSC/Ovis, Reno                    |
| February 4-7  | SCI, Las Vegas                    |
| April 25      | CA WSF Fundraiser, Rancho Cordova |

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# President's Letter

Thank you to all of our members and friends who attended our recent California Wild Sheep Foundation annual dinner fundraiser in Rancho Cordova and helped to make it a huge success. We hope you enjoyed the evening as much as we enjoyed having you there. Thanks also to our many donors and supporters who contributed to the event.

For those of you who were unable to attend, you missed a great evening and we missed you there. Although raising much-needed funds to support and enhance California's population of wild sheep was the primary mission of the evening, we also took a few minutes to give some people a little recognition for some huge and special support for our cause.

We were privileged to have with us — and be able to personally thank — **Derek and Joanne Berry of the C. J. Berry Foundation**. Derek and the C. J. Berry Foundation has provided generous support for water projects over the last several years that have been coordinated and completed by CA WSF and our sheep conservation partner organization, the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep. I think that Derek had been confident the C. J. Berry Foundation's contributions were being put to good use by the dedicated leadership of the two organizations, but he was genuinely impressed with the enthusiasm and passion demonstrated by the "rank and file" membership participating at the annual fundraiser. It was an honor to join with the SCBS to give a small token of appreciation to Derek and Joanne. CA Wild Sheep and the SCBS hope to have the privilege to continue to work with the C. J. Berry Foundation for the benefit of wild sheep in the years to come.

Many California sheep hunters know Tim Mercier and Cliff St. John of Dry Creek Outfitters to be very hard-working and successful sheep outfitters and guides. Once again, last season they assisted several hunters lucky enough to draw tags for California wild to fulfill their dreams. Their hunters included two who tied for oldest sheep by a CA WSF member and also they also guided the biggest ram by a CA WSF member. But most people are unaware of the tremendous, unsung efforts these two individuals contribute to the wild sheep of California. They guide and outfit because of their passion for wild sheep, not for what they take from the resource. Their contributions far outweigh the success of their hunters in the field. CA WSF was honored to present them with this year's "Above and Beyond Award."

I must also extend a heart-felt thanks to the fundraiser committee for the time and effort devoted to the success of this year's event. Months and planning and hours of free time and effort are devoted to making a single evening a fun and successful event.

For those of you who attended this year, and for those who were unable to make it, mark your calendars for Saturday, April 25, 2015 to meet once again at the Rancho Cordova Marriott to celebrate and support California's wild sheep. Until then ...

Good Hunting!!!

Paul Brisso, President, CA WSF



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## 2014 IN REVIEW

*by Mike Borel, VP Operations*

Since California WSF's beginning in 2001, we've been active on all fronts related to bighorn sheep in California, and especially the desert bighorn. In 2013, we experienced our most serious challenge to the sheep (the helicopter crash in 2010 with the loss of four persons was more significant to human life) – a disease outbreak and resulting die off of sheep in the Old Dad and Marble mountains. Fortunately, our relationships with CDFW, the Mojave National Preserve, BLM, our sister organization SCBS, and others were current, strong and functioning. This enabled appropriate financial and physical support, often on short notice.

When dead and dying sheep were identified in 2013, CDFW immediately called CA WSF, asking for emergency funding for a critical helicopter survey in the affected area. Approval was granted in just a few days and over \$31,000 of funds were provided to the Department.

2013 was also our biggest year ever in funds raised and utilized for bighorn sheep: \$246,307 total! Money raised by the fundraising tag and raffle tag are a sizable portion (\$170K) and go directly to CDFW. The addition of the helicopter work funded brought the CDFW total above \$200K. The next major recipient of funds is the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS), our sister organization who used all the moneys donated for drinker installations and refurbishments done (\$39.5K). We also continued our contributions to Washington State University to help fund their ongoing effort to develop a vaccine or other method that will prevent domestic sheep from passing on a deadly form of pneumonia to wild sheep. Significant progress has been made in this effort. 2013 also brought our cumulative funding for desert bighorn in CA to over \$1 million!

The CA Sheep Summit was initiated by CA WSF to bring together all stakeholders in the stewardship of Bighorns in California. The meeting just held May 2, 2014 is the 15th biannual meeting of this group, which has become the guiding committee for bighorn sheep conservation in California. The major result of the Sheep Summit is the Bighorn Sheep Comprehensive Management Plan. The BSCMP is expected to be finished shortly; land and locations for more water projects have been identified; the helicopter roadblock looks to soon be a thing of the past; we have more people working on wild sheep now; and the CDFW funding is available to move forward! In summary, all parties involved in the "Sheep Summit" believe we are on the threshold of achieving some great things for wild sheep in California.

None of this would have been possible without the support of our members. You folks are the reason we've accomplished so much and you will be the reason we will accomplish far more in the years ahead! Thanks to each of you for participating in this year's fundraiser. This is our one major event each year where we raise funds that are used in the ensuing year to benefit wild sheep in California. Our goal is to achieve maximum sustainable populations in as many areas of historical presence as possible. A natural, critical and important result of achieving healthy sustainable populations is greater opportunity for hunting!

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

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## SOUTH BRISTOL RAM HUNT

*by Gary Rotta*



I applied for a bighorn sheep tag in 1987, the first year that California hunters were given the opportunity to apply in our home state. Many of us dreamers never thought that this day would occur, but here it was. Filling out that application and getting it in the mail was truly exciting, as visions of chasing full curl rams in inaccessible desert mountains filled my head. Like many of us, I did not get drawn that year, nor the year after or several years after that (we all know the story). But with each yearly entry into the drawing, I was full of renewed enthusiasm. Then came the preference point system, and I thought that this may improve my chances. Each year I diligently applied for the Old Dad Kelso Zone and continued to daydream of the opportunity.

But eventually applying for the tag just became routine and the visions of chasing sheep had

dissipated; building up preference points seemed to be the only reason I applied; indifference on getting a tag had set in. In 2011 DFG opened up a couple new zones, so I thought I would shake it up a bit and apply for the new Cady Mountains zone for a couple years. In 2012, after considering the welfare of my knees and nagging back I said to myself that this would be the last year for me to apply for this tag. Result: another preference point.

When it came time to apply for the bighorn drawing for 2013, I was committed to let it go, not apply, and face the fact that this hunt was not going to happen. But with the application in front of me, and the insurmountable odds of getting drawn staring me in the face, some force inside me told me I would be foolish to quit applying now. So I stubbornly submitted the application, this time for Zone 8, South Bristol Mountains.

In the middle of June some of my buddies asked what deer zone I had drawn, and I said that I had not checked yet. So that afternoon I checked the DFG website and saw what I expected, drawn for zone X6a which is located basically across the street from my house. But then there was another row that appeared in my results; the successful column said very simply, "Yes." *What was this? No it could not be, let me read this again.* In a bureaucracy sometimes Yes means No and/or No means Yes. So I read it again. The realization hit me, and I simply told my wife that I had been drawn for a bighorn sheep hunt – no real excitement, just disbelief and then an overwhelming feeling of *what do I do now.*

Well I got online, typed in "bighorn sheep outfitters" and was immediately drawn to Dry Creek Outfitters. The website was eye-catching, well thought out, comprehensive, and easy to use. But best of all it became evident that this was an outfitter that knew the bighorn sheep zones in California and their success was evident in the multiple photos and testimonials on the website. On June 16 I contacted Dry Creek through email, got a phone call back from Cliff, then one from Tim. After calling several references, I was sold and on June 21, I booked my hunt for the opening 10 days in December, 2013. Not one minute of regret booking this fast with these guys.

On the day of my arrival, I found camp very easily. From the compound setting to the inside of the cook/dining tent, it looked exactly like the



photos on the website. The woodstove was a god-send for the cold, windy desert nights; it was a great gathering spot to discuss the day's events and share recollections of past hunts prior to dinner. I had my own four-person tent that provided me the luxury for gear sprawl.

Opening day we spent a good portion of the morning glassing distant hillsides and rock outcrops for out-of-place white butts. Cliff and Jason were with me, and I was amazed how they quickly found sheep, especially from distances exceeding a mile. We were watching a group of ewes when we got a call from Tom that he had a ram in his scope that needed a closer look. About an hour later we found Tom and the ram he was observing. How he found this ram is truly amazing as it was almost two miles away and bedded near a saddle. Cliff and I proceeded to get a closer look while Jason went on a point to the south to observe from a different angle. We got within 800 yards of the ram when we decided it was not what we wanted. We spent the rest of the day observing more ewes.

The next morning we started glassing at the north end of the South Bristols. About 6:45 a.m. Cliff and Jason found one small ram in a draw on the lower third of the slope; soon thereafter we found three more rams up high in a rock outcrop sunning themselves and escaping the wind. We were about 1.5 miles from the sheep. Two of the three rams looked good, but one - supporting heavy horns - stood out. We watched them move downhill and over the crest of the ridge. We then made our move to get a closer look. Jason once again was sent to a rock outcrop on top of a ridge to the west, while Cliff and I slowly made our way to a side ridge that we anticipated would bring us into view of the rams. As it turned out, we needed to cross this ridge, walk through a small saddle and creep to a lower, northern ridge to find the sheep. Cliff got into position and scoped the three rams while I waited just below the ridgeline.

About ten minutes passed before Cliff came back and said that we had at least two shooters. Hearing "shooters" sent a jolt of anticipation, as well as a bit of apprehension through my system. This could be it; after 26 years of applying for this opportunity, I was going to see a desert bighorn ram in my rifle scope – unbelievable! Cliff and I moved up to the spotting scope to look at the best ram. Cliff said he thought it was a mid-160s ram. It was bedded 270 yards from us, facing away, and calmly chewing

cud. Through the spotting scope I could see that the ram carried the mass of its curled horns well out to the broomed ends; each symmetrical horn slightly flared out. I decided that this was the ram which would fulfill all those 26 years of dreams.

For about 45 minutes we lay prone, looking over that ridge at the bedded ram. With my 7 mm mag propped on a backpack, I looked through the scope, settling the crosshairs on the ram. I felt really stable, my breathing was good - I was ready. All the ram had to do was stand up. Then the wind came up, the same wind that had been biting cold earlier in the morning. Cliff said he didn't like this wind, and I agreed. Soon I started to chill, and my hands got a bit numb. With the ram still bedded, we decided to back down the hill about 10 yards and get out of the wind to warm a bit. We were warm in no time and crawled back to our shooting post. Whoa! The ram was standing and appeared to be looking right at us. How could he be looking at us?

All of that previous 45 minutes of practicing the shot, the placement of my arms amongst the rocks, my breathing, had a calming affect on me and made me confident in the shot. But now at this moment I could feel my heart beating a bit faster and that was disconcerting. Cliff must have heard it, because he asked how my heartbeat was and told me to let it calm. There was no hurry, the ram

was just trying to figure out what was going on but was not alarmed. About a minute passed, I told Cliff I was better; he told me to let off the safety, aim at the shoulder, and shoot when ready. I was ready; I was confident, and I was at ease. It was 1:45 p.m. On the blast, Cliff said the sheep was hit and told me to load another shell. When I found the ram again in the scope, he had fallen under one of the few desert shrubs scattered across the hillside, then rolled out to the barren open slope on his back and did not move. Cliff slapped me on my back and said, "Dead sheep."

After hugs I gathered my stuff and proceeded down the hill to get my hands on my trophy. I crossed the draw and was heading uphill when the other two rams came back for a second look. They were about 50 yards from me, so I dropped my backpack, whipped out my little digital camera, and got about five photos of these guys; quite a nice bonus to my experience.

All of the Dry Creek guides that were out and about were alerted to the kill, and all arrived at the site to lend a hand. After numerous photos, all of the guides got involved in tending to my animal. When we were through with the caping, skinning, and packing up the meat, it had become dark. We all walked out of the dry, desert hills with headlamps beaming ... almost as bright as our smiles.



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## ABSTRACT

### Health Status and Microbial (Pasteurellaceae) Flora of Free-Ranging Bighorn Sheep Following Contact with Domestic Ruminants

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Eighteen bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) with known or suspected contact with domestic ruminants on public or private land were removed to prevent possible disease transmission. Live bighorns maintained in captivity were monitored for evidence of respiratory disease. Contacts with cattle (n¼44) occurred in December, January, and July; whereas, most contacts with domestic sheep (n¼10), goats (n¼43), or both (n¼41) occurred between April and October. Four bighorns died within 7 days following capture and 10 survived from 47 days to 57 months in captivity. Five bighorns had gross and/or histological evidence of pneumonia. Pasteurellaceae were isolated from 17/18 bighorns, and domestic ruminants that were contacted by 4 bighorns. Isolates included

multiple biovariants of *Mannheimia* spp. and *Bibersteinia trehalosi*, and *Pasteurella multocida* subspecies and biotypes. Pasteurellaceae from pneumonic lungs included *Mannheimia* spp. biovariant 1, *P. multocida* subsp. *multocida* a, and *B. trehalosi* biovariant 2B. The *Mannheimia* spp. biovariant 1, isolated from 2 pneumonic bighorns and contacted domestic sheep, had restriction fragmentlength pattern similarity coefficient values of 1.0, indicating high similarity and likely sharing between the species. Management implications include the need for species separation and rapid responses to contact situations because 28% of the bighorns died with evidence of respiratory disease following domestic ruminant contact.

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Full report available at [http://www.cawsf.org/pdf/Health\\_Status\\_Bighorn\\_Sheep.pdf](http://www.cawsf.org/pdf/Health_Status_Bighorn_Sheep.pdf)

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Hilbers Inc.</b><br/>Kurt and Mary Hilbers</p>                                                                                                              | <p><b>Artistic Wildlife Taxidermy</b><br/>Eric Gould<br/><a href="mailto:artisticwildlifetaxidermy@yahoo.com">artisticwildlifetaxidermy@yahoo.com</a><br/><a href="http://www.artisticwildlifetaxidermy.net">www.artisticwildlifetaxidermy.net</a></p> |
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# The REAL Robert Charkowitz

Green Score 177 1/8

2013



Brooks Stiltz of Dry Creek Outfitters  
posing with Robert's ram

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# OROCOPIA SHEEP HUNT 2013

*by Robert Charkowitz*



It was late one night in June when I got a call from my father. He said, "I just got home and there's a letter from the DFW for you. Looks like you're going to be in a bit of trouble." I hadn't hunted in the last year, so I had no idea what I could have possibly done to incur their wrath. He then said, "You're going to have to get in shape and start practicing your shooting, because you've just been drawn for desert bighorn in the Orocopias ... the hunt of a lifetime!" I recalled my dad explaining to me his strategy for entering me in sheep zones when I was at home on break from school, so I was familiar with the name of the zone, but at that time, little did I know what a big deal this actually was.

When I returned home for the summer, we began preparing for the hunt. We started by calling hunters who had hunted the zone in

years past and anyone else who might have information to try to learn as much as we could short of visiting the zone for ourselves. Two things we learned were that the zone had very rugged terrain and that hiring a guide would be extremely beneficial. Since I was graduating from UC Davis after the fall quarter, we initially planned on doing the hunt on our own, due to my ability to hunt for the whole season. But after talking to Tim Mercer and Cliff St. Martin of Dry Creek Outfitters, we knew that they would be an invaluable asset to have guiding me on the hunt. They were friendly, helpful, and supportive of us doing the hunt on our own. They seemed more interested in my success on the hunt than having me as a client, and it was that which made us choose to hire their services.

When I got back to Davis for school at the end of summer I worked out at the gym frequently, but with the lack of hills in Davis, I was limited to flat land hikes with a heavy pack. To supplement my workout with hikes, for which I was told there was no substitute, I fit extra trips into my schedule to hike the steep hills around Lake Berryessa. Along with getting in shape to traverse the steep and rocky terrain of the Orocopias, I had to get used to shooting my Remington 700 in .270 Winchester. My dad cooked up some loads using Barnes 130 grain bullets on top of Dupont IMR 4350 for my hunt, and I had to get used to shooting up to 300 yards. I had never practiced at ranges greater than 100 yards. On the first trip to the range we took nine hours trying out over a dozen different cartridge loads, trying to find the one that my gun shot most accurately at 300 yards. Once the load was selected, subsequent trips were spent shooting from different rest positions until I was getting good groups at 300 yards.

Three weeks before my hunt, during my Thanksgiving break, my dad and I headed down south to scout a bit and become familiar with the roads in the Orocopia Mountains. We wanted to make sure we got experience walking the terrain and had a better idea of what to expect. While the climbs were steeper than expected and we saw no

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sheep on our brief expedition, it confirmed our choice to hire a guide for the hunt.

A couple days before my hunt started my dad got a call from Cliff to let us know that the auction tag hunter had harvested the ram thought to be the biggest in the zone, which Cliff and Tim called "Corkscrew," and that they wouldn't be in the zone when my hunt started. This news was a relief. I no longer had to try to finish my finals, move out of my room in Davis, and get packed and down to the zone all in a day. Now I could relax, take my time (do all that stuff in two days instead of one), and hunt on my own terms without having to compete with another hunter in the zone at the same time.

On Sunday, December 15, we pulled into sheep camp as the sun was setting and finally got to meet the whole outfit. We were a bit surprised by the total number of guides in camp. Besides Tim and Cliff, there was Cliff's son Matt, Brooks, Shawn, and Ben. They had been on the mountain looking for sheep before we arrived.

That night over dinner we reviewed some pictures the guides had taken that day. There were a lot of ewes, but only a couple of nice rams. Tim pointed to the biggest of the rams they had footage of and estimated he would score around 175. My dad was a bit skeptical of how Tim could tell the score of a sheep by looking at a slightly blurry photo taken from over 1,000 yards away. My dad wanted me to take a few days to check out the zone and avoid being too hasty, taking the first nice ram that presented itself. There are no guarantees in hunting, but knowing the biggest ram in the zone had just been harvested, and to see a ram just a handful of inches smaller, seemed to me just about as good as it could get.

That next morning we split up into teams and drove out of camp before sun-up. As the sun started peeking over the mountain tops, we left the trucks and set off into the desert, toward where the rams were last seen the day before. We climbed into the lower foothills and set up our first glassing position. After about an hour of seeing nothing, we decided to reposition. We dropped down into a wash and headed toward the mountain, thinking this would be the easiest route. After being on the move for just a few minutes I heard Cliff say, "Get down." He had spotted some motion on the skyline about a mile ahead of us. After we took out

the spotting scopes and confirmed it was a bunch of ewes, the ewes decided they had gone far enough and bedded down on the skyline. From there we had to rethink our path of approach, as we followed the wash around a corner and came to a part where we would not be covered by the high banks of the dried up wash. Our group backtracked to a small ravine off the main wash where we could climb out and remain out of the sight of the ewes.

As we set up to glass the ridge where the ewes were bedded, two nice rams walked up over the rim of Orocopia Canyon 400 yards to our left as we were glassing the ewes on the skyline due west. Matt and I put the stalk on the rams that we believed to be the same ones they had seen the day before. We closed the distance to 220 yards without being seen by using the rolling foothills as cover to approach the canyon.

The rams were unaware of our presence, as I lay down and crawled up to the top of the crest of the hill for my shot. As I put my muzzle over the top readying for a shot, they spotted the motion and froze, Matt told me, "Take the lower one," and I took the shot. A cloud of dust erupted near the end of my barrel and I knew I had missed, I quickly took a follow up shot as the rams ran over the top of the canyon rim, but was not feeling confident. Matt, who was watching with his scope, confirmed that I had missed, but he thought that if the rams followed the rim of the canyon, we could head them off by cutting the angle across the foothills. We ran the hundred yards to get in position on a hill with a view of the back side of the canyon wall, and in the direction the rams were headed.

There we waited. I knew the rams couldn't have beat us, as they had to cover a lot more distance than we did to get to this part of the canyon, and where they could get to higher country. After an eternity ... about three minutes ... we saw them walking on a ledge of the far canyon wall headed deeper into the big canyon. During that time my only thoughts were: focus, breathe slow, squeeze the trigger. (I also had the fleeting thought that I wouldn't get another chance at this ram.) The rams stopped right before a bend in the canyon wall and took a look out over their magnificent sprawling canyon about 275 yards away from us. As I was setting up for my shot, Matt was telling

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me to make sure the smaller ram was not behind my target. As the smaller of the two stepped forward and provided a clear shot of my ram, I took the shot just as Matt started to say, "Take him!" I could see a shock wave ripple across the ram's body and I knew I had hit him. Matt confirmed the hit, just behind the shoulder but a bit low.

The two rams bolted around the corner of the rocky canyon wall and were lost from sight yet again. We hustled to the rim of the canyon and out onto a knife's edge, all of three feet across to get a better vantage point. We could see the smaller ram running up the mountain, out of the canyon, but could not see the one I shot. Then we saw him lower down, right above a fold in the canyon walking slowly. Laying on the rocky knife's edge, with yellow jackets buzzing around me, attracted by our sweat (an uncommon source of moisture in this otherwise arid desert), I took the final shots to bring down my ram and stop him heading deeper into the unknown that is Orocopia Canyon. With the second hit, he stopped for a second. He then continued forward slower than before, but still determined to shake his pursuit. The third hit caused him to lock up his legs trying to dig in and find purchase on the almost vertical wall of the canyon. He started to slide, losing traction. He tumbled into a 75-foot free fall deeper into the canyon, hitting hard. He tumbled another 30 feet before coming to a stop behind a boulder in a narrow finger canyon a third of the way up from the canyon floor. As the ram went down, Matt jumped on my back, tears in his eyes, congratulating me on harvesting a truly remarkable animal.

It was just after noon, and the sun was beating down. Cliff had caught up with us, but we had to collect our packs, which were left behind when we started our stalk. I went back for them alone, and it was then that it hit me how tired I was. As I walked back over the ground I had just crossed, adrenaline worn off. The goal achieved, I thought about the incredible amount of energy that must be expended to take the life of such an incredible animal.

I met back up with Matt and Cliff, packs in tow, after only getting turned around a couple of times while searching for where we had set down our packs. I had not paid attention to the terrain as I walked through it, my thoughts focused on the ram. We half walked, half slid down the side of the canyon and then started our climb up the other side to where the ram lay.

True to Tim's word the ram's green score was 177 ⅓, there are some things you can only learn from many years of experience. While I couldn't be happier with my hunt, I doubt I will come to fully appreciate all that it meant until I am older and wiser, looking back on the days of my youth, when I had the privilege of hunting desert bighorn sheep in the Orocopia Mountains of southern California.

I can't thank my dad enough for researching the zone, helping me prepare, and planning the details of my hunt.

I am also very thankful for all of the experience and of the work put into scouting by the crew at Dry Creek Outfitters. Thanks Cliff, Tim, Matt, Brooks, Shawn, and Ben, for such a memorable once in a lifetime experience!

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## WSF ESTABLISHES MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

Cody, Wyoming, USA. May 9, 2014 – On May 1, the Wild Sheep Foundation established a \$60,000 endowed scholarship at Montana State University in Bozeman, to promote wild sheep conservation, education, and management. Named the ***Wild Sheep Foundation, Kevin Hurley Wild Sheep Biology Award***, this scholarship was established to recognize and acknowledge the dedication and career achievements of WSF Conservation Director Kevin Hurley of Cody, WY. This award will provide an annual \$2,400 scholarship and/or education award in perpetuity, to graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate students at MSU focusing their research and career preparation on wild sheep, mountain goats, and similar mountain ungulates.

“The WSF Board unanimously approved \$50,000 for this endowed scholarship in Kevin’s name in December 2013, as our way of recognizing Kevin’s 38-year wildlife career, with over 33 years focused on wild sheep conservation and management,” stated WSF Chairman Marc Hansen of Chester Springs, Pennsylvania. “In addition to that \$50,000 start, WSF members Russ and Debi Young of Addison, Texas donated another \$9,000, and Kevin Hurley donated the final \$1,000 himself, establishing our \$60,000 corpus,” noted Hansen. The first award of \$2,400 will be presented in fall 2015, following a one-year holding period for the fund to grow through earnings.

In addition, WSF members Carl Phillips and Anna Lukasik of Portland, Oregon donated another \$10,000 to WSF for this program, directing immediate use of their donation to deserving MSU wildlife management students. Working closely with MSU Director of Development Ms. Kelly Meredith and Dr. Robert Garrott, Director of MSU’s Fish & Wildlife Ecology and Management Program, Thornton and Hurley developed criteria and a timetable to present two \$4,000 awards to MSU students, with one award to be presented in June 2014 and the second award to be presented in September 2014. The remaining \$2,000 will be directed toward another project in summer 2014, per the wishes of Carl Phillips and Anna Lukasik.

Dr. Garrott of MSU stated “recognizing and supporting students early in their careers can have immeasurable impacts as these young folks move into the professional ranks and make individual contributions to effective natural resource management for careers that will likely span 30 years or more.” Dr. Garrott further noted “Kevin Hurley is an outstanding example of just such a person, and we can use many more like him in the years to come.”

“These gifts represent \$70,000 of dedicated mission funding by WSF and our altruistic members,” added WSF President & CEO Gray N. Thornton; “WSF is very excited to work with Dr. Bob Garrott and Montana State University to help train the next generation of wild sheep managers and conservation professionals, in the name of WSF’s Kevin Hurley.”

The Wild Sheep Foundation, formerly the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS,) was founded in 1977 by wild sheep conservationists and enthusiasts. WSF is dedicated to enhancing wild sheep populations, promoting professional wildlife management, educating the public and youth on sustainable use and the conservation benefits of hunting while promoting the interests of the hunter and all stakeholders. With a membership of more than 5,500 worldwide and a chapter network in North America, WSF is the premier advocate for wild sheep, other mountain wildlife, their habitat, and their conservation. Since forming in 1977, the Wild Sheep Foundation and its chapters and affiliates have raised and expended more than \$95 million on conservation, education and conservation advocacy programs in North America, Europe and Asia. These and other efforts have resulted in a three-fold increase in bighorn sheep populations in North America from their historic 1950-70s lows of ~25,000 to ~80,000 today.

Gray N. Thornton, President & CEO  
Editor in Chief, Wild Sheep Magazine  
Chadwick Ram Society member



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

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



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### **Desert Bighorn Sponsors**

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Mike Borel, Context Network

Kyle Meintzer, Lincoln Financial Advisors

Earl Parker

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## **SPECIAL HUNT WINNERS**

**2014 Nevada - Antelope Hunt**

David Haas

**2015 Alaska - Dall's Sheep Hunt**

JoAnen Bonzhaf

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## **ANNUAL AWARDS**

**Oldest Sheep (tie)**

Nick Siimpson - 11+ (South Bristol Mtns)  
Robert Ybright - 11+ (Marble/Clipper Mtns)

**Largest Ram**

**Taken by CA WSF Member**

Robert Charkowicz - 177 1/8

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# 2014 Fundraiser

*Photos were taken by Chip Hollister, chollister3@yahoo.com, 925-586-8980 – Special Thanks from CA WSF*









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## **WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION RECOGNIZED BY BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND U.S. FOREST SERVICE AS JOINT CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP PARTNER OF THE YEAR**

Cody, Wyoming, USA. March 24, 2014 – The Wild Sheep Foundation's (WSF) focus on mission effectiveness was recognized during the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service Joint Awards Reception held during the recent 79th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference held in Denver, Colorado where WSF was presented the Joint Conservation Leadership Partner of the Year Award for 2014.

"We are pleased to honor the Wild Sheep Foundation, a partner dedicated to wild sheep conservation, education, and hunting for the past four decades. The Foundation provides a vital role working with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service), along with other federal and state agencies, and other partners on wild sheep and habitat management. The Foundation also helps to advance the latest science on wild sheep so that management decisions are based on up-to-date scientific information. We work with the Foundation to identify shared goals to sustain wild sheep and habitat on public lands and to provide hunting opportunities now and into the future" Steve Small, BLM, Chief, Division of Fish and Wildlife Conservation stated during the presentation.

"The Foundation does a tremendous job coordinating among state, federal, tribal, and partner organizations, including international governments and partners. A great example of this coordination takes place at the Foundation's annual Sheep Show™ convention, which includes a Wildlife Professionals meeting on important wild sheep topics. This meeting is typically held in conjunction with WAFWA's Wild Sheep Working Group meeting. These forums provide opportunities for the Foundation, the BLM, and the Forest Service, along with States and other partners,

to share information, identify challenges, track accomplishments and identify opportunities to collaborate in the management of wild sheep and habitat. The Foundation is a great partner in so many ways to keep wild sheep on the land" Small added.

"To be so recognized by our agency partners before our industry peers for accomplishing our Mission is truly an honor" Gray N. Thornton, WSF President & CEO stated while accepting the award with WSF Conservation Director Kevin Hurley. "Wild sheep will only thrive through partnerships and collaborative efforts. WSF will continue to work closely with federal, state, tribal and provincial partners to accomplish our mutual wild sheep and wildlife conservation goals" Thornton added.

The Wild Sheep Foundation, formerly the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS,) was founded in 1977 by wild sheep conservationists and enthusiasts. WSF is dedicated to enhancing wild sheep populations, promoting professional wildlife management, educating the public and youth on sustainable use and the conservation benefits of hunting while promoting the interests of the hunter and all stakeholders. With a membership of more than 5,500 worldwide and a chapter network in North America, WSF is the premier advocate for wild sheep, other mountain wildlife, their habitat, and their conservation. Since forming in 1977, the Wild Sheep Foundation and its chapters and affiliates have raised and expended more than \$95 million on conservation, education and conservation advocacy programs in North America, Europe and Asia. These and other efforts have resulted in a three-fold increase in bighorn sheep populations in North America from their historic 1950-70s lows of ~25,000 to ~80,000 today.



Outstanding Achievement Award – Presented to Terry Anderson by the Wild Sheep Foundation and the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation, Reno, Nevada, January 24, 2014

*Editor Note: Jim and Leann Craig were instrumental in making this award happen. Thank you, Jim and Leann!*

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# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



**Bob Keagy, Auction Hunter**  
**Red Stag**  
**Algar Safaris**  
**400+ Points**



**Perry Null**  
**Cady Mountains**  
**San Geronio Wilderness Outfitters**  
**171 5/8 B&C**



**Bruce Hamilton**  
**Sheephole Mountains**  
**San Geronio Wilderness Outfitters**  
**One of the largest rams taken from range**



**Bob Ybright**  
**Marble Mountains**  
**Dry Creek Outfitters**  
**175+ Ram**



**Mike Smith**  
**Marble Mountains**  
**Dry Creek Outfitters**



**Bob Keagy, Auction Hunter**  
**Javalina**  
**Point Blank Hunts**  
**Possible Top 10**

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# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



**George Davis**  
**Clark Kingston Mountains**  
**San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters**  
**Waited 50 years to complete his Grand Slam**



**Nick Simpson**  
**South Bristols**  
**12-year-old Ram taken with Dry Creek Outfitters**  
**Nick is a 19-year-old hunter from Idaho**



**Bob Keagy, Auction Hunter**  
**Wild Boar**  
**Algar Safaris**  
**400+ Pounds**



**John Shaw**  
**Roosevelt Elk in California**  
**San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters**  
**381+**



**Jim Craig**  
**Old Dad Mountain**  
**San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters**  
**7th Grand Slam**

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# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



**Paul Roen**  
San Gorgonios  
Dry Creek Outfitters  
174+ Ram



**Sean Osmond**  
Old Dad Mountain  
San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters  
Last ram to be harvested from range for many years, if  
not, forever ... due to die-off from pneumonia.



**Shelly Sayer**  
Auction Hunter - Orocopia Mountains  
San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters  
183 1/8



**Bob Keagy, Auction Hunter**  
Aoudad  
Point Blank Hunts  
118 SCI



**Tom Vizthum**  
White Mountains  
San Gorgonio Wilderness Outfitters  
Only tag harvested of the three hunters

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# EL VIZCAINO BIOSPHERE RESERVE DESERT BIGHORN HUNT

*by Eduardo Negrete Franco*



I arrived at Loreto on December 10, was picked up and driven into camp. I was very surprised when I asked the guides on my arrival if they had seen any nice rams, and they told me that they had not, and that they did not know they were guiding my hunt until December 8, just 2 days prior to my arrival. Before that they had been in Mulege looking after their area there.

At breakfast on December 11, one of the guides saw a ram from main camp. I thought it was a very good sign and we went to look for it right away. The closest we could get to it was 3 km and we were looking from the bottom of the mountain. The two main guides – Francisco and Gilberto – said they were not sure what we were looking for

and that they needed to get closer. The ram kept moving around the Three Virgins Volcano. At dusk Francisco, the main guide, told me that he thought the ram was not worth going after the following day because it was too nervous and he was not sure it was an old ram. I told him that we should try to take a better look, but he said not to worry because we were going to go to an area with a lot of rams. At dinner that night, I again commented that we should go after that ram the next day, but Francisco said that it was not worth it and that we would find rams near the sea. So we made plans to look for some other rams the next day.

While having breakfast, I again mentioned that we should take a look and see if the ram from the

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earlier day was in an accessible area. Again, they said to forget about that ram and that we should go look for other ones. This time Leonel went with us. We started climbing, but he felt sick and stayed behind while we kept going. When we reached one valley we stumbled on a ram with three females at 200 yards. Francisco, the guide, said that it was a young ram, but we kept glassing him while he trotted away and disappeared. When Leonel caught up to us around 1:00 p.m. he mentioned that he had seen a ram. He showed it to the guides, and from 4 km away they decided it was worth taking a closer look at. We saw nothing else that day.

On December 13, we climbed a hill to look at the ram from the previous day. We were about 3 km away and the guides, Francisco and Gilberto, decided that it was a ram we should go after. Gilberto and Juan went down the mountain to keep an eye on him, while we went all around the valley to get on top of the ram. We were able to do this and at 2:00 p.m. were right on top of it. We were ready, but at 337 yards, Francisco decided that it was a young ram, so I took some great video of him. The mules and donkeys had already been sent down the mountain, but they had to return so we could keep hunting. Gilberto, Juan and Leonel went back to the main camp, to spend the night.

The following day, December 14, we were fogged in until 10:00 a.m. At that time we started hunting, and we again saw a young ram and one female. We made a small camp for that night and sent Gilberto to look for the ram on the Three Virgin Volcano from the first day. The prior day I had told the guides that I would be staying only until December 17, so that I could still have four days to return, and that I needed to have them do some pre-scouting so that we could be successful the next time. The guides complained that they had not been told that I would be arriving, they said that they like to start looking for rams at least one week before the client arrives so that they could show a legal old ram in the first two days of their hunt to the client, so the hunt would run smoothly and fast. They said that for sure they would have one ready on my return in case we did not get one in the next couple of days, but that they were sure we would have a ram by then.

On December 15 we saw no rams and only four females. On the way back to the main camp one of the donkeys fell down and died on a cliff. We arrived to the main camp that night and everyone

was very tired, but we were looking forward to hunting for the ram in the volcano the next day, especially since Gilberto had been keeping an eye on him all day and said the ram had moved into a very reachable area at dusk.

On December 16, the last day of my hunt, we started after the ram at 7:00 a.m. The ram got nervous and started moving up the volcano. Francisco had sent two teams of guides to keep an eye on the ram while five of us hiked after it. At 2:00 p.m., and having been without water since 11:30, we found out that they had lost the ram. We decided to still get to the top and to start looking for it. We asked for a climber to bring water to us using the hiking trail, which is a lot easier and shorter. We reached the top at 2:30, and went to the place where they had seen it last. At 4:45 p.m. Juan spotted the ram about 2 km from the place we were looking for it and a lot lower on the volcano. Francisco, Juan and I made a run for it, closing the distance to 800 yards, with no time left as the sun was already setting, and we knew we were on the final minutes of ethical hunting time.

I practice often at up to 900 yds and had told them before that I was capable of taking long range shots if needed. After the first shot both Francisco and Juan said that I had missed. The ram did not move, so I took a second shot. Again, they said that I had missed and that I had hit at the same spot as the first shot. Now I knew the rifle had moved in one of the falls either I or the guides took while carrying the rifle up to volcano that day. I corrected accordingly and missed right under the mouth of the ram. With this shot he took off and we agreed it was no use to continue shooting. We had given our all and lost. Leonel contacted Francisco and said that the shot had been too late. Francisco said that there was enough light for them to call the shots and they had all missed. By this time the person carrying the water had made it to the top of the volcano, so we were finally able to drink 500 ml of water each, as he said there was no more water in camp.

We came down the volcano at night and I had several falls, one of which injured my left knee. At 11:00 p.m. we made it to the cars and from there drove back to main camp. Here was the first time I saw Leonel after leaving him early December 13. Leonel's words that evening were that he was surprised and worried that we had not seen any legal rams, that there had never been a hunter who had

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tried as hard or done as much as I had done, and that even the guides could not go anymore. I agreed with this. Even though they are young guides, we had taken a brutal beating.

All the guides said they would really try to find a good ram for me on my return.

NOTE: Eduardo was provided the second hunt at the end of the season and was successful — this is a nice old ram and yet looks almost unscathed. According to Eduardo “He was a lover, not a fighter!”

**Black Rock Outfitters**

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# California Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation

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

Have you hunted Sheep? Yes ☐ No ☐

If "yes," which sheep have you harvested? (Please list and note year)

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Kyle M. Meintzer, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Practitioner shares this commitment and heritage. As the Founder of the California Wild Sheep Foundation and a long-time Life Member of the organization, he sees the importance of aligning personal passion with financial independence. For over thirty-seven years he has helped guide conservation-minded families and business owners through the varied challenges of wealth accumulation, business succession, retirement, estate and legacy planning. He has utilized his extensive experience to uncover untapped financial opportunities on his clients' behalf, while still tackling the challenges that could lie ahead.

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### **Special Award for C. J. Berry Foundation**

presented by the California Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation and  
Society for Conservation of Bighorn Sheep to Derek Berry for dedication to conservation  
and making a significant contribution for desert bighorn sheep in California.

*Photo courtesy of Chip Hollister*



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