



California Wild Sheep

Spring 2017



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Michelle Corder

11 ½ year old ram

Marble / Clippers

Dry Creek Outfitters



ULTIMA THULE LODGE

CONTACT: DONALD C. MARTIN 310-766-3921



From the Editor's Desk

I hope you enjoy this issue. It includes some great hunting stories, more on our 2017 Fundraiser, fun humor, interesting desert insights from Carlos, science and CDFW articles, lots of pictures, AND MORE! Good luck in the various state tag draws and raffles for 2017.

Your feedback, ideas, articles & requests are always welcome. Best way to reach me is email: mike.borel@contextnet.com. Due date for input to the 2Q17 issue is May 20.



CA WSF BOARD ELECTIONS COMING UP IN JUNE – NOMINEES SOUGHT

CA WSF has 16 Board positions and the term is 2 years. Half of the positions expire each year, which enables Board continuity year to year. We have 7 terms expiring and 2 existing open positions, making a total of 9 to elect. You will receive a ballot, with candidate information, in June. Here is the status of that election:

Board Members whose Terms expire June 2017: Paul Brisso, Adam Casagrande, Ken Crother, Bob Keagy, George Kerr, Don Martin, and Craig Van Arsdale.

Board Members whose Terms expire June 2018: Aaron Armstrong, Mike Borel, Ben Gordon, Jon Kruger, Dwight Ortmann, Don Priest, Darryl Williams, and Shawn Wood. Paul Brisso is not planning to run for re-election.

Persons who are so far known to be considering running, in addition to incumbents, are: Debi Casey, Jake Franklin, and Glen Pyne.

If you would be interested in committing some time and talent to CA WSF please let President Paul Brisso or VP and Newsletter Editor Mike Borel know! We are seeking Board candidates and Fundraiser volunteers.

After the Board election, we will be electing officers for the next 2 years. The President position is term limited at 2, and Paul Brisso has served in that capacity for 4 years, so a transition will be needed. Positions include: President, VP Operations, VP North, VP South, Secretary, Treasurer.

Husband and Wife Shopping

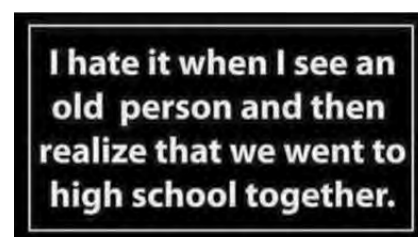
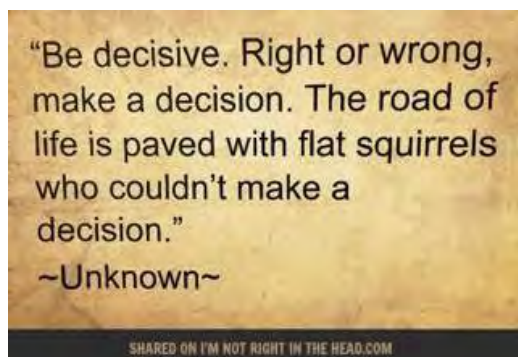
A couple was in a busy shopping center when the wife suddenly noticed that her husband was missing, and since they had a lot to do, she called him on the mobile.

The wife said "Where are you, you know we have lots to do?"

He said, "You remember that jewelers we went into about 10 years ago, and you fell in love with that diamond necklace? I could not afford it at the time, and I said that one day I would get it for you?"

Little tears started to flow down her cheek and she got all choked up... "Yes, I do remember that shop," she replied.

"Well I am in the gun shop next door to that."



Board of Directors

Officers

President

Paul A. Brisso (2017)

Northern California Vice President

Aaron Armstrong (2018)

Southern California Vice President

George Kerr (2017)

Vice President, Operations

Mike J. Borel (2018)

Secretary

Ken Crother (2017)

Treasurer

Adam Casagrande (2017)

Board of Directors

Ben Gordon (2018) Dwight Ortmann (2018)

Robert Keagy (2017) Don Priest (2018)

Jon Kruger (2018) Craig Van Arsdale (2017)

Donald C. Martin (2017) Darryl Williams (2018)

Shawn Wood (2018)

California Wild Sheep is published quarterly.

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

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

Humorous outtakes provided by Tammy Scott
Published by Beverly Valdez, Gaiatec Services

Events

2017

April 18-21	Desert Bighorn Council Meeting, St. George, UT
April 28-30	NRA Convention, Atlanta, GA
May 5	Sheep Summit XXI in Sacramento (DoubleTree by Hilton)
May 6	CA WSF Fundraiser/Banquet in Sacramento (DoubleTree by Hilton)
May 20	Due date for articles for 2Q2017 CAWSF Newsletter
June 1	Ballots out for Board of Directors Election
June 22-23	WSF Chapter & Affiliates Meeting, Kalispell, MT
June 24	Completed Board of Directors Ballots due
August TBD	DBH Hunter Orientation in Sacramento (8-12:00)
August 20	Due date for articles for 3Q2017 CAWSF Newsletter
September TBD	DBH Hunter Orientation in Ontario (8-12:00)
November 20	Due date for articles for 4Q2017 CAWSF Newsletter
December 1	Sheep Summit XXII in Ontario

President's Letter

Dear CA Wild Sheep Members and Friends:

I have to admit that fall is my favorite time of the year, but this time runs a close second. The rush of the holidays and the New Year is over and the days are getting longer. The hunting shows and banquets provide ample opportunities to catch up with old friends and prior guides and outfitters, meet new friends and explore the potential for new adventures.

It is also the time of year to start planning applications for draws for limited entry tags in numerous states. Like baseball spring training, it is a new season with unbridled optimism. Is this the year my 20-plus preference points for desert sheep in Nevada will finally pay off? Will I beat the odds and draw some other tough-to-impossible tag? After all, someone has to win and—at least until the draw results are back—I figure I have just as much chance as anyone else.

The California Wild Sheep banquet gala is usually about the last conservation dinner on my schedule each year. Sure, I am biased, but it is also my favorite and I think the best, and this year is no exception. I am looking forward to the event on May 6, 2017 at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Sacramento.

As you will see elsewhere in this edition, we have three fantastic special drawings this year: The ever popular **Alaska Dall sheep hunt** (for 2018), courtesy again of our good friends and supporters Ultima Thule and guide (and California Wild Sheep Board member Don Martin); an exciting **Gunwerks LR 1000 with Nightforce scope** (a \$9,000 value) boasting “out of the box” 1000 range accuracy; and an **Alaska bison hunt** including a tag that is very difficult to draw.

Our auction lineup will feature great hunting opportunities and other items. Our general raffle will highlight **Swarovski 10x40 rangefinder binoculars**, a **Kimber** rifle with scope (each worth about a \$3,300), a **Nosler 26 Liberty rifle** (you’ve seen that on TV a lot), other high end firearms, some items specifically for the ladies in mind, and other desirable prizes. As those who have enjoyed the past years’ events know, you won’t find a lineup of low end firearms in the California Wild Sheep raffle.

California Wild Sheep continues to do great work for California’s desert sheep and their habitat. The California auction sheep tag brought a record \$235,000 at the Sheep Show in Reno this year—a testament to the continued success of wild sheep conservation in California.

Be part of the excitement, great work and success of California Wild Sheep by being part of the gala event in Sacramento May 6. Make your reservations and buy your special drawing tickets early so you don’t get shut out. And if you can’t join us, remember the Gunwerks and Alaska bison hunts do not require you to be present to win. See you there!!

Good Hunting!

Paul Brisso
President, CA Wild Sheep Foundation



MONARCHS AND BADASSES

by Michelle Corder



"You drew the Bighorn Sheep tag!" my husband hollered on the other end of the phone. "Ok," I replied, puzzled by his excitement, "That's good, right?"

As the news spread like wildfire through our small Northern California town, I quickly learned that yes, it was a very good thing; most hunters we knew had been putting in for years to be drawn for this hunt. I hit the hunting lottery – there were only three tags available in my unit, and just seventeen issued in all of California in 2016. In every conversation those first few weeks, my husband, Travis, would open with, "Michelle drew a Bighorn Sheep Tag in the Marble/Clippers!" Surprised smiles often turned stiff however, when they learned that I drew the tag with zero points.

Once I truly understood the rarity of this opportunity, I was determined and eager to prepare the very best I could for the hunt – to respect the other 3,116 hunters who had applied for a tag in this unit. I quickly assembled my "A-team" to assist me – obviously my best friend and husband, Travis, as well as his lifelong buddies and true hunting machines, Robert Utterback and Chris Holland, who generously

took time off work and from their families to share this experience with us. I spent the next six months honing my shooting skills on Larry Plog's long distance range with our local expert, Jim Gilligan, who also built my 6.5mm Creedmoor. In addition, I hired a trainer, who proceeded to ruthlessly kick my butt into shape to hike mountains while carrying a gun and pack.

While my personal learning curve was steep, my family was a great resource. Both my father-in-law, George Corder, and brother-in-law, Tarron Corder, are insanely competitive and committed hunters. Tarron was lucky enough to draw a Bighorn Sheep tag in the San Geronios in 2002. While George and Tarron decided to tackle the hunt on their own, they often turned to Tim Mercier and Cliff St. Martin from Dry Creek Outfitters for advice – which was given freely. With their help, Tarron was able to harvest a beautiful ram. When George learned that I drew the tag, he immediately commanded, "You need to hire Dry Creek!" Taking his advice turned out to be crucial to my success.

By the time Travis and I pulled into Dry Creek Outfitter's camp, I felt I already knew both Tim and

Cliff. They stayed in close communication for the months leading to my ten day hunt in late December – calling with information, quickly answering every question, and sending countless game cam photos to light my fire. Our crew quickly developed an easy camaraderie over days spent glassing and hiking the same hills General Patton used to train his troops, and nights sharing meals and stories in the cook tent. The tough as nails characters gathered together for my hunt were truly what made the experience so memorable. Dry Creek's leaders were Tim "Cowboy" Mercier, the warm, spiritual heart of the team, and Cliff "Partner" St. Martin, who organized his men with military efficiency and strode up hills as steep as a double diamond ski run without breaking a sweat. Quiet, sharp-witted mountain man Ben has dedicated his life to the hunt. I could just as easily see Ben wearing trapper's furs a hundred years ago as the camouflage he wears today. Kurk, or "Sawyer" with his twinkling blue eyes and constant grin kept us laughing with his storytelling, and dedicated, fun-loving family man Tom "Tonto" spent every moment he could with us in the field. Our fanatical hunting friends, Rob and Chris, were quickly recognized as the real deal and snapped up into the scouting team.

After dinner the first night, the spotlight turned to me. Cowboy quizzed, "Are you looking for a perfect, pretty ram to hang on your wall, or a rougher veteran with some character?" We spent the next couple of hours studying game cam photos until I could answer his question. There were four specific rams I set my sights on. These majestic old princes wore the scars from years of battles for supremacy. Of course, actually locating one of these wily, experienced rams in the rough, steep terrain of the Marble and Clipper mountain ranges was no easy feat. We saw nearly fifty gorgeous animals over the week, but the old rams I was seeking remained elusive.

Finally, it was the eighth day of the hunt, and my birthday. I had grudgingly decided that I would have to settle for one of the younger, "pretty boy" rams if we were not successful on today's hunt. We began the morning by glassing the Clippers at dawn. Cliff and Ben quickly picked up a pair of rams following the sun about two miles into the hills. Cliff stayed on them, muttering, "He's big – he's really big." After a few more minutes of intense focus, he exclaimed, "It's the goiter ram!" That was all I needed, he was one of my targets – a rugged old ram with a distinctive lump on his neck. I jumped up and started packing my gear, ready to head out. Cliff and Ben were luckily not as excitable, they took their time plotting their strategy; locating the washes we could sneak through, possible shooting locations and alternate plans if we were spotted or winded. Ben took point on this hunt, and guided us silently and meticulously through the shadowed, bouldered creek beds leading to the base of the mountain. Even at this distance, the rams



could easily spot us, so we leapfrogged; taking turns glassing to make sure we weren't seen while the other two snuck ahead. The last thousand yards were nearly straight up a rocky cliff. As we drew close, Ben turned and whispered, "Michelle, you're not going to have any time with this one - be ready to shoot." He led us to an outcropping just 250 yards from the hilltop clearing where the two rams were feeding. He was right; within moments after I spotted the younger ram, the old ram winded us. I quickly picked him up in my scope as he spun and streaked with staggering speed up a cliff. Travis quietly coached behind me, "Don't shoot, wait, wait..." The ram bounded on top an enormous boulder, spun, and quartered towards me. "Shoot!" Travis exclaimed, and I did. I jacked another round in the chamber, ready to finish the wounded ram as he leapt back down the hill. "Don't shoot him again, Michelle – you got him," Ben said, just as the ram started tumbling; shot through the shoulder and heart.

As we crossed the 302 yards to my ram, the rest of the crew had already begun charging through the rocky miles and boiling up the mountain toward us. The old ram was exactly what I hoped for; dignified but worn – wearing the proof of the battles he'd won. As one man after the next crested the cliff leading up to the clearing, I shook my head in amazement, "These guys are badass!" Ben nodded and poetically added, "Monarchs and Badasses!"

WATER WORKS IN THE DESERT

Society for Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS) members work rain or shine to enhance the desert for bighorn sheep and other desert inhabitants. CA WSF members are welcome, and encouraged, to join them in their efforts. CA WSF

supplies funds for equipment and other support for many of these drinkers.

If you would like to have a copy of the full report on this and other work JOIN the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (sheepsociety.com)



All photos by Deb Miller Marschke

MAJOR VICTORY FOR SIERRA BIGHORN – NO DOMESTIC SHEEP GRAZING ON CONWAY / MATTLY RANCHES

by Jake Franklin

A great victory for wild sheep took place on March 7, 2017, when the Mono County Board of supervisors voted to no longer allow domestic sheep grazing on Conway and Mattly Ranches. These grazing allotments were the biggest threat to Sierra Bighorn disease transmission and with domestics soon to be absent the success story of Sierra Bighorn can now continue.

My small part in this large success started at Sheep Show a couple years back when I was speaking with Alex Few from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, she was sharing with me the unique final obstacles that Sierra Sheep faced before a possibility of a down listing on the current endangered species. I saw an opportunity to help the state accomplish something that they have been striving to achieve for countless years.

A few meetings later I was put in contact with the man in charge of the Sierra Bighorn project, Dr. Tom Stephenson. Tom is a breath of fresh air when it comes to biologists and he was extremely welcoming to my unique ideas. Over the next year or so Tom and I went back and forth on different plans of action for the Conway Ranches.

On December 13th 2016 a meeting was sprouting stating the county will be deciding the future of grazing on Conway Ranch. The next 24 hours was a whirlwind for me, knowing Tom was out of town and there was a small chance of a crowd in support of wildsheep, I prepared what we had and headed to Bridgeport. As expected the Pro-Domestic sheep crowd outnumbered the Wildsheep crowd. Everyone spoke clearly and voiced their opinions, which was what the board had seen over and over for years. I was fortunate enough to bring to the table a unique proposal to put an alternative species on the ranch for grazing, and I will bid it competitively. Due to this being a business that I had been working on for years, their questions and concerns were answered to their approval. That day a motion to approve domestic sheep grazing was proposed by the Chairman, to be followed by the other supervisors questioning if they should consider other species for grazing. Nothing was passed that day, which allowed Tom and many other individuals to prepare an immense amount of information supporting the science of disease transmission.

A follow up public hearing was scheduled multiple times, just to be canceled due to the extreme weather in the Eastern Sierra. Finally a date of March 7th was settled on. Sierra Bighorn Foundation and many citizen volunteers rallied the troops to support the Sierra Bighorn for the March 7th hearing. The pro-



wildsheep turnout was amazing. The meeting started with a wealth of knowledge and science provided by Tom Stephenson (CDFW) and Erin with U.S Fish and Wildlife. I followed with alternative options for the ranches, which ended up not being needed. The county decided to end the competitive grazing lease on the ranch all-together. Sometimes all it takes is the right knowledge put forth in the right manner and big things can happen. This was a huge win for both wild sheep supporters and grazers. The future of grazing needs to be looked at differently then it ever has before. We need to use our stock as a tool for the land and not the land as a tool for the stock. If the right tool was used initially on these ranches, there is a possibility Sierra Sheep would be thriving in the same fashion that they had for thousands of years. Thanks to the incredible work from the Bishop CDFW crew working tirelessly towards a stronger Sierra Bighorn population, we just may see those thriving numbers in our lifetime.

***Join Jake and others
celebrating this win for the
sheep at the CA WSF banquet
May 6, 2017***

BIG B

by Jim Mcisaac



Opening my e-mail last April, I wondered what New Mexico Game and Fish was sending me. All I saw was congratulations, successful, and bhs. BHS! THAT'S BIGHORN SHEEP! I logged onto their website and sure enough there was my tag. After telling my wife, Sue, and calling good friend Gary, I sent out a "you ain't going to believe this e-mail" to family and friends.

A week later I was contacted by Gilbert Villegas, the biologist for the White Sands missile range, where the hunt would take place. I would be allowed three people to help me, and we were all required to have background checks before entering the base. Good friend and fellow sheep hunter Gary Bordessa was my first choice. My next choice was another group of fellow sheep hunters. In 2009 I hunted with Dry Creek Outfitters in Southern California. I've since been back with them helping glass for some of their hunts. They were itching to go along on my hunt. At one point I told Cliff I would just hire them to guide me. His response was "No, you've helped us we are going to help you." Does life get any better than this?

At Cliff's advice we had background checks on two more people in case someone had to back out. For the next six months there were many phone calls and e-mails to Cliff, Gilbert, and other hunters. Unfortunately about a month before the hunt, Gary called and said he couldn't make it. A call to Cliff and I still had my three man team.

Leaving early on December 12th, my first stop was to pick up Cliff St. Martin (aka Partner), Shawn Lindey (aka Alabama), and Tim Mercier (aka Cowboy). We drove to Arizona that night, then on to New Mexico for the orientation at the White Sands. With four sheep hunters, Gilbert divided the hunt into four areas. We would rotate our areas after four days, or when a hunter harvested a ram. I drew area one,

which historically has held a large number of sheep.

Gilbert had set up some days in August when we would be able to learn the roads, lay of the land, and do some glassing. Since I didn't get there (New Mexico is a long way from California), Gilbert would escort us. Did I already say, does life get any better than this?

On opening morning Gilbert told us that from his surveys, he knew of a ram pushing 180 who never comes off the very top of the mountain. He also knew of a 165 ram that was usually in a very accessible spot. Shawn said "Let's put some glass to the mountain first". Within minutes of getting set up, Cliff picked up some ewes and two smaller rams. A short time later, four rams with some ewes were spotted. Two of them were shooters, one of which was collared; he was the number two ram. They moved around the ridge out of sight, which worked to our advantage. By 7:30 Cliff, Shawn, and I were going in on them. Tim and Gilbert stayed on the glass, both from different vantage points. Three miles up the canyon, Shawn set up behind Cliff and me to get a different angle on the sheep.

Right away we spotted a ram and a few ewes not far from where we first saw them. Cliff knew this was not one of the shooters. A while later a bigger ram came into view. I got ready to shoot 400 yards. Instead of staying with the others, he came off a steep bluff towards us. Cliff said. "That's a big ram, but we need to see all four before we make a decision". Sometime later the collared ram came into view. We waited to see the last ram, while the big one kept coming closer. Finally the last one came out. Cliff said "Take this one", referring to the one that continued to get closer. By this time he was only about 200 yards, but there was brush between him and I. I stayed on him until he disappeared into a low spot. Until now I was calm, I knew I would see him again but didn't know where. It seemed like minutes, but was probably only seconds, when he ran through a deep wash then came out past it and stopped. I don't think I've ever seen a ram this close. No need for a rangefinder. If he was over 100 yards, it wasn't by much. It still took two shots- the first one hit him low, the second put him upside down. As I got to him, I thought "WOW, what a ram". When Shawn got there, all he could say was "look at those bases! Those bases are huge! I can't get my hands around the bases! Bases! Bases!"

Cliff arrived with a tape. With both horns sporting bases of 16 4/8, he became known as Big B. We started taking pictures while waiting for Tim & Gilbert. Gilbert arrived and gave me a big bear hug. He said "I always hug my hunters". With Tim and Gilbert there, we took more pictures with everyone.



We told Tim and Gilbert how the ram came to us. Tim said with a chuckle "I bet that ram was tired of living on that mountain". Gilbert said we made a liar out of him. This is the ram he saw on the very top of the mountain.

Next was skinning, quartering, and packing out. Like they say, many hands make light work. Tim said

a prayer when we were all packed up. "Thanks to the Lord for this opportunity and His help getting us off the mountain safe."

I've packed out sheep heads and capes before, but none as heavy as this one. Tim and Cliff had to rearrange my pack part way out. What a day. We left the pickup at 7:30 am, had the ram down at 11:30 am, and were back to the pickup before 4:00 pm.

When we got back to where we had cell service, I called Sue, then Gary. My dream team was sending pictures to my family and friends, and everyone they know. The next day we went to the Game & Fish office to have the ram scored, aged, and plugged. He is 11+ years old and grossed 182 6/8.

Drawing this tag, killing a great ram with great friends – "Life is Good!"

Thank you Cowboy, Partner and Alabama! I could not have done this without your help.

GSCO CONVENTION 2017 RECAP

by Brenton Scott



Grand Slam Club / Ovis' 2017 Slam Quest convention was held in Las Vegas the last week of January and the week prior to Safari Club International's convention being held in the same city.

Good guys do get recognized, thankfully, and it is refreshing to see. I had the privilege to watch a number of people I know and greatly admire celebrate with rooms full of appreciative people applauding and celebrating milestones with them. Some people call them awards, but that is a gross understatement when the accomplishing and achieving of a particular milestone, or milestones, is seriously considered.

It was wonderful to watch the latest Grand Slams celebrated, especially since two dear friends - one from Colorado and the other from Minnesota - were recognized for accomplishing this major feat of mountain hunting. The one from Minnesota is a

retired career school teacher and coach that did a ton of ball game officiating to earn the extra money needed to feed his sheep fever. Ask me about him sometime, it's a great and long story of an incredible friendship. He just happens to have also spent a couple of decades on the board of the Minnesota-Wisconsin chapter of FNAWS' board (now Midwest Chapter WSF), with a decade or so being in the position of president of the chapter.

Jay Link was another person recognized for a huge accomplishment, the Pantheon. All of the efforts that go into achieving this award, a joint collaboration between SCI and GSCO, is mind boggling to say the least.

Ed Yates, ever humble and appreciative, was completely surprised when he was honored with the Ovis. It was very much deserved.

Conventions are about people. People who share your interests and passions. People you admire or like. People you feel good about. People who become friends or that you only get to see at conventions annually. I hadn't intended to go to the GSCO convention this year due to a tight travel schedule, but I'm glad I did.

Go, enjoy, live, share, revel, celebrate!

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Bob Keagy
Desert Bighorn
Mexico
Amigo Guides & Outfitters
*This completes Bob's "Sheep Slams"
including the Triple Slam. Congrats!*



Lou Demers with an Altai Ibex
from Mongolia in 1985
It is 62" long and is a world record



Ken Ford
CA Desert Bighorn
Dry Creek Outfitters



Pat Mauney
166" California Bighorn
Oregon
Dry Creek Outfitters.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Devin DeValle
175" California Bighorn
Clark/Kingston
Dry Creek Outfitters



Craig Van Arsdale
Mountain Goat
British Columbia, Cda



Eric Gould
Dall Sheep
Alaska
Ultima Thule Outfitters - Jay Stanford and Don Martin



Jake Franklin with his hunter's ram
California Bighorn
Kika Worldwide



Jon Kruger
Sindh ibex
Pakistan



John McGray
Desert Bighorn
South Bristols
Dry Creek Outfitters

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Mike Laws
168" desert bighorn sheep
Marble/Clippers
Dry Creek Outfitters.



Adam Casagrande
California Bighorn
Idaho
Self-guided



Jim McIssac
Bighorn Sheep
New Mexico
Dry Creek Outfitters



Michelle Corder
11 ½ year old ram
Marble/Clippers
Dry Creek Outfitters



Ken Henkelman
165" California Bighorn
Clark/Kingston
Dry Creek Outfitters



Chris Carrigee
Boone and Crockett Bighorn
Nevada
G&J Outdoors

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Adam Lanier
Boone and Crockett Bighorn, Nevada
G&J Outdoors



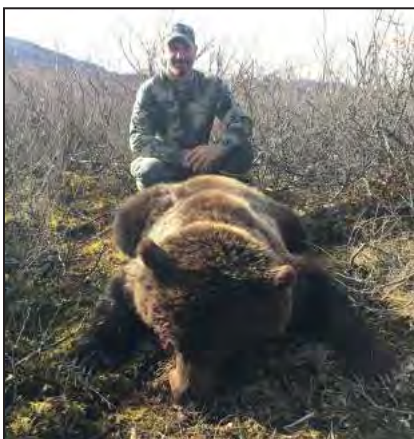
Cole Casagrande
First bull elk at age 11
Arizona



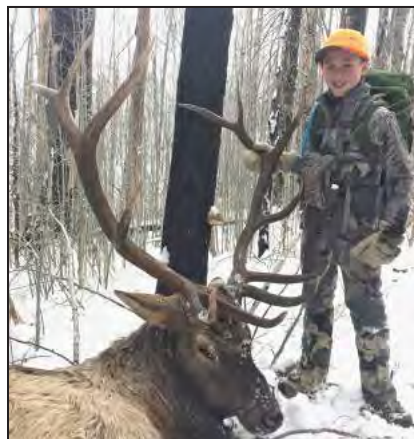
Bob Keagy
Free-ranging Gemsbok, Mexico
Amigo Guides & Outfitters



Patti Holloway
Tule Elk, Won at CAWSF auction 2016
Jim Bardin Ranch with Don Martin and Bob Swanson



Eric Gould
Brown Bear, Alaska
Ultima Thule Outfitters
- Jay Stanford and Don Martin



Caden Casagrande
1st Bull elk at age 12
Arizona



Bob Keagy
Mule Deer
Mexico
Amigo Guides & Outfitters

2016 – A YEAR IN REVIEW

CA WSF continues to be active on all fronts related to bighorn sheep in California, as we have since our founding in 2001. We continue to collaborate with CDFW, the Mojave National Preserve, BLM, our sister organization SCBS, Oregon State University, Washington State University, WSF and others – To monitor, study and learn from the 2013 disease outbreak and resulting die off in the Old Dad and Marble mountains. To lead a collective effort to achieve maximum sustainable populations of bighorn in as many areas of historical presence as possible.

2016 was another strong year for CA WSF. In addition to MANY hours of effort leading, supporting, influencing, and raising money, we invested another \$118,043 mostly in research projects and continued support for water projects with SCBS. We continued our contributions to Washington State University to help fund their ongoing effort to develop a vaccine or other method that will prevent domestic sheep from passing on a deadly form of pneumonia to wild sheep. Significant progress has been made in this effort. We are also ACTIVELY participating in CDFW's Big Game Management Account grant process. Our collaboration with Dr. Clint Epps, Daniella Dekelaita and Oregon State University "Characterizing the spread and consequences of respiratory disease for desert bighorn sheep in the eastern Mojave Desert" is another effort at understanding the fatal disease.

In the last 15 years we have raised and invested \$1.4 million for the benefit of wild sheep in CA. In addition, we, and our sister organization SCBS, have hosted every "Sheep Summit – the December one was #20!" The CA Sheep Summit was initiated by CA WSF to bring together all stakeholders in the stewardship of bighorns in California.

All parties involved in the CA Wild Sheep Summit believe we are on the threshold of achieving some great things for wild sheep in California. The meeting just held December 2, 2016 was the 20th biannual meeting of this group, which has become the guiding committee for bighorn sheep conservation in California. The major result of the Sheep Summit is the Bighorn Sheep Comprehensive Management Plan (BSCMP). The BSCMP is expected to be finished shortly; land and locations for more water projects have been identified; we have more people working on wild sheep now; and CDFW funding is available to move forward!

Major contributions prior to 2016 include: We pushed for and funded surveys that resulted in the addition of the White Mountain hunt unit and the Cady/South Bristols Hunt unit which have enabled over 30 successful hunts for DBH! We pushed for and made happen the Harmon Bill, thereby providing financial oversight on the DFW's use of the money

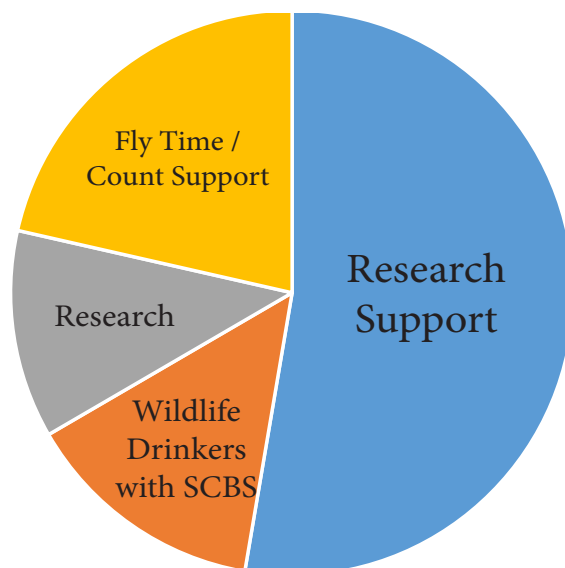
in the Big Game Account (which itself was created by the bill). It also called for the creation of the Big Game Advisory Committee, on which we sit and of which one of our members (Kyle Meintzer) is the Chair and it also set up the CDFW Grant process. We pushed for and made happen the DBH, Deer, Elk and Antelope Random draw tags by CDFW. We were also responsible for getting the legislature to pass the bill that allows NGOs to receive 5% of the selling price of fundraising tags, as well as charge a Buyer's Premium for them.

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, gnarly, old rams! Much has been done, AND much more is left to do! Please do what you can ... the sheep, sheep hunters and sheep enthusiasts need you!

Join the 162 Life Members / 242 Members who are doing that now.

CA WSF
Organizational Lifetime of Support



CA WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION ANNUAL FUNDRAISING BANQUET
MAY 6, 2017, DoubleTree by Hilton in Sacramento

Be an "Early Bird" (complete registration by April 20, 2017) to get tickets for an Early Bird drawing for \$1000 in banquet credits.

_____ **Single Dinner/Event ticket - \$100** \$ _____

- > One (1) Dinner/Event includes entry to the Displays, Speakers and Auctions
- > Get one (1) chance at the Early Bird drawing if registered by April 20, 2017

_____ **Youth Single Dinner/Event Ticket(s) - \$50 each (14 and under)** \$ _____

- > One (1) Dinner/Event Ticket, includes entry to the Displays, Speakers and Auctions plus one special youth prizes

_____ **Reserved 1/2 Table (5) Dinner/Event Tickets - \$475** \$ _____

- > Five (5) Dinner/Event includes entry to the Displays, Speakers and Auctions
- > Get five (5) chances at the Early Bird drawing if registered by April 20, 2017

_____ **Reserved Full Table (10) Dinner/Event Tickets - \$900** \$ _____

- > Ten (10) Dinner/Event Ticket includes entry to the Displays, Speakers and Auctions
- > Get ten (10) chances at the Early Bird drawing if registered by April 20, 2017

General Raffle Tickets are \$20 each or select one of these packages

_____ **\$100 Drawing Ticket Package** \$ _____

\$120 (6) General Drawing tickets

_____ **\$300 Drawing Ticket Package** \$ _____

\$400 (24) General Drawing tickets and one (1) \$300 Bonus Drawing tickets.

_____ **\$500 Drawing Ticket Package** \$ _____

\$700 (42) General Drawing tickets, three (3) \$300 Bonus Drawing tickets and two (2) \$500 Bonus Drawing tickets.

Thank you for your generosity in sponsoring and donating to CA Wild Sheep Foundation

_____ **Desert Bighorn Sponsorship** \$ _____

Donate to underwrite firearms for the drawing; tax deductible. You will receive recognition in the event program and the quarterly newsletter. 1 firearm \$350 2 firearms \$700 3 firearms \$1050

_____ **Donation to Help Sponsor the Event and Support Wild Sheep in California** \$ _____

Please especially consider if you will not be able to be there! (Any amount)

_____ **Custom Gunwerks Rifle Drawing Tickets - \$50 each or \$1,000 package of 21 tickets** \$ _____

_____ **Dall Sheep Drawing Tickets - \$20 each or \$100 package of 6 tickets** \$ _____

_____ **Alaska Bison Drawing Tickets - \$20 each or \$100 package of 6 tickets** \$ _____

Total Payment: _____ Check Credit VISA MC AMEX

CREDIT CARD _____

EXP DATE ____ / ____ CVC# _____ BILLING ZIP CODE _____

NAME ON CARD _____

SIGNATURE _____

SELF _____ 6 _____

2 _____ 7 _____

3 _____ 8 _____

4 _____ 9 _____

5 _____ 10 _____

Make checks payable to
CA Wild Sheep
Foundation

Mail to:
423 Broadway #617
Millbrae, CA 94030

Fax to:
650-472-3889

For your records, CA FNAWS (dba California Wild Sheep Foundation or CA WSF) is a nonprofit organization. FNAWS tax identification number is 69-0481140.

CA WSF ANNUAL BANQUET UPDATE

by Donald C. Martin, 2017 Fundraiser Chair

As the outdoor show season winds down, we can all start to look forward to our Annual Fundraising Banquet coming up on May 6th at the Sacramento DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel. The Sacramento DoubleTree is a new location for us as our event continues to grow. It is conveniently located across from the Arden Fair Mall in Sacramento and when navigating to our new venue, enter 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, CA 95815, into your vehicle or mobile device's navigation application. Many of you may have attended other events there as it hosts the CA RMEF and Sacramento SCI dinners each year. The Sacramento DoubleTree is accustomed to hosting hunting conservation events and they are very happy to have us. Hotel rooms are filling up fast, so don't delay. Make your reservations today! Go to Sacramento.DoubleTree.Com and enter WSF in the Group Code when making your reservations.

As always there are a few items in our live auction this year that I'll want to highlight. First off, is the return of a **Tule Elk Bull Permit and Hunt** that Bob Swanson of the Jim Bardin ranch has agreed to auction off through our event. This year was the best ever for quality of bulls on the Jim Bardin Ranch and next year is looking just as good. Steve Hopkins of Fairfield was lucky enough to hunt with us this past year and the story of his hunt appears in this issue. He was fortunate enough to take a tremendous typical 6 point after an arduous 5 days in the Mountains of Monterey County. Congratulations Steve! Hunt dates for this year's tule elk hunt will be for early December 2017, but dates are negotiable as the permit is valid until December 31st.

New to our auction this year is a **California Open Zone** deer permit. This permit will allow you to hunt any unit in the state during the scheduled season. If you're tired of waiting to draw a permit, **THIS IS THE PERMIT FOR YOU!** Think of the possibilities of having a permit that will allow you to hunt any unit for mule deer or blacktail. Given the rising cost of a top quality PLM deer permits in CA, this Open Zone Permit is starting to look more and more like a serious bargain. Consider bidding on the opportunity of a lifetime and enjoy the freedom of hunting the entire state of California.

The State of Alaska has been very generous to us this year and we have received three permits, two of which will be in our live auction. First off is a Delta Junction Controlled Use area **Dall Sheep Permit**. This is a highly desirable permit and is available to both residents and non-residents alike. Non-residents of Alaska will be required to hire a registered guide for this hunt. Season dates are Aug 10- Sept 20 and there



are access restrictions to the hunt area. Contact me if you have any questions regarding this hunt.

The second Alaskan permit is a non-resident Unit 13D **Moose permit**, which is the unit South of the Glenallen Highway. I'm currently working on lining up an air service or a guide to provide the buyer of this permit a turn-key opportunity for moose whether he or she chooses to hunt with a guide or go DIY. A registered guide is not required for moose in Alaska.

As the show approaches we usually have a flurry of donations in the wake of the trade show season and I'm happy to report we have two new opportunities for **antelope**, both of which include landowner tags. One is in Nevada and open to any hunter, while the other is in Eastern Colorado and is a hunt for youth or veteran. So consider purchasing an antelope hunt for the youth or veteran in your life.

Couple of specific art items I want to highlight in this year's auction. First is a **Byron Birdsall** original watercolor of three dall sheep rams. Byron generously donated the painting as a 100% donation to CA WSF in November of 2016. Sadly, Byron passed away unexpectedly on December 4th, 2016. This may be the only wild **sheep-themed** watercolor he ever did. Additionally, Frank Entsminger of Tok, Alaska has generously donated a limited edition **Marco Polo Bronze** titled "Pride of the Pamirs" and is #16 of 26. Frank and his wife Sue, 2016 WSF Artemis Award winner, have been long time supporters of WSF and this is their first donation to CA WSF. Thank you Frank and Sue.

Our live auction is rounding out nicely with additional hunts foreign and domestic for whitetail deer, coues deer, exotics, ibex, mouflon, and others. Additionally, we have a diverse selection of non-hunting vacations, guided tours, a long-range shooting school, and sheep scouting trips available as well.

Highlighting our special random drawings, I am pleased to announce that, once again, we are giving

away a 10 day 1x1 **dall sheep hunt with Ultima Thule Outfitters** for opening week 2018 and I will personally guide the winner. This hunt has been over 90% successful for previous raffle winners. New for this year, **YOU MUST BE IN THE ROOM TO WIN IT!** There's no greater excitement than witnessing someone win the hunt of a lifetime, especially if it's YOU! Do not miss this year's event.

In addition, we have two other premiere random drawings this year. The first is for the coveted **Chitina River Alaska Bison Permit**. This herd of about 100 bison produces the largest trophies in Alaska and some of the largest trophies in North America. Only two permits are available to the public through the State drawing. This incredible trophy hunting opportunity is fully supported by Ultima Thule Outfitters and all bush flights and accommodations have been generously donated by Paul and Donna Claus. Guides/ Packers, etc are extra, but our staff will do everything to make this the hunt of a lifetime for a lucky winner.

Finally, our last special raffle item is a custom **Gunwerks LR 1000** rifle chambered for 7MM Magnum and is topped off with a **Nightforce 5.5-22x50 scope** with custom Gunwerks long range turret. This is a turn-key long range system good to 1,000 yards right out of the box. Tickets for the rifle are limited. There are only 250 available so don't

delay. Purchase your raffle tickets early at: <http://cawsf.org/store.html>

Our annual event has developed the reputation of being "THE dinner" to attend and this year is no different. Don't delay, purchase your tickets early at: <http://cawsf.org/store.html> and be eligible for our early bird drawing for \$1,000 in event credit. Of course, I understand that there are always circumstances that will prevent some of you from joining us. If you are unable to attend, please understand that the needs of California's wild sheep are the same and this is our only fundraiser of the year. We need your help. Please go to your computer and go to: <http://cawsf.org/donate.html> and click on the yellow donate icon. Please help underwrite our event with a tax deductible \$1000 donation or whatever you can afford to "Put and Keep Sheep on the Mountain."

We are still accepting merchandise/hunt donations for our event. If you feel you have an item for our live auction, silent auction or general raffle that will help to raise money for California's bighorn sheep, please email me at: don-martin@earthlink.net

Thank you for supporting California's wild sheep. I'll see you May 6th

AB 1544 UPDATE

by Bill Gaines, Gaines and Associates

CA WSF is **Working to Keep You in the Field** by co-sponsoring legislation in the current Session of the California State Legislature which, if passed, could prove critical to keeping hunters in the field.

Assembly Bill 1544 would provide hunters with critically needed relief from AB 711, the "lead ban" bill. When the AB 711 ban goes into full effect in 2019 – and nonlead loads are suddenly required for hunting all wildlife statewide – California's retailers will have severe difficulty obtaining enough nonlead ammunition to meet the sudden increase in demand.

Additional 2016 legislation resulted in difficulties getting out-of-state ammunition, providing a "perfect storm" atmosphere to prevent law-abiding hunters from finding ammunition locally. Thus, AB 1544 was introduced to alleviate some of the problem by allowing the Director of F&W to suspend the prohibition for a hunting season and caliber should ammunition of that caliber not be available for any reason.

CA WSF members can play a critical role in helping pass this bill by contacting your elected representatives and urging them to strongly support this critically needed legislation, and/or attending committee hearings at our State Capitol and testifying in support. See full information at www.cawsf.org/news

NEWS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

The NYT posted a story with a [positive slant on sheep hunting](#) — wow!

California Coastal National Monument expands. [California Coastal National Monument Land Expansion Update](#)

[Nonlead Ammunition Required Statewide for 2017 Spring Wild Turkey Season](#)

Wyoming and Montana continue with successful [bighorn sheep relocations](#) to grow herds

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke issued an order reversing the [ban on lead ammunition and fish tackle](#) used on national wildlife refuges

Potential new [Pope and Young world record](#) desert bighorn

Scientists hope to find a way to [stop the spread of disease](#) that continues to limit the success of bighorn herds throughout the West using Hells Canyon bighorns

CALIFORNIA BIGHORN DREAMIN

by Adam Casagrande

The chatter and excitement of what just occurred started to die down about a half mile into the pack out as the temps started to rise and the heavy packs started to weigh on our shoulders. Temps were expected to break the 100 degree mark that day so we knew we needed to get the meat out of our packs and into the coolers as soon as possible. Marcus, Jason and I marched on knowing the Polaris was waiting at the wilderness boundary two miles ahead.

The pace slowed as the boulders under foot grew larger and the direct route we were on turned into a zigzag in and out of the rocks. The distance between the three of us grew as we each hit our own stride. It was at this point I started to reflect back on all that had taken place over the last few months and what an incredible journey this had been.

The application process in the off season for me is one that I put a lot of effort and time into. Trying to plan and strategize for the upcoming season. There are however a handful of hunts each year I apply for, that you just can't plan for. The ones that are just pipe dreams, the ones that make your mind wonder while pressing the submit button asking yourself what if.

In early June as I checked the results of the Idaho California Bighorn Sheep draw that "what if" turned into reality. I would be one of the lucky few this year in Idaho that get the opportunity to live out that pipe dream. The phone calls and the research began as my hunt would start in less than three months. Being that I lived only a few hours from the unit I would be hunting, I couldn't wait get boots on the ground and find my first sheep.

My plan was simple, gain as much information about the unit as I could and get eyes on every ram that called the unit home. This entailed talking with biologists, game wardens, past tag holders and anyone that was willing to share information with me. However, I knew in the back of my mind that no matter who I talked with or what information I gathered the most important thing I needed to do was scout the unit myself.

Within a week of the draw results being posted I had my maps in hand and found myself bouncing down some of the roughest desert roads I have ever been on. It turned out to be a long, hot and dusty first day but I felt it was a success as I familiarized myself with the roads and access points and wouldn't you know it I even found a young solo ram only a few hundred yards off the road. I planned to make one or two trips down to my unit per week and with a busy family at home and work I knew I needed to make every trip count. I found the best and most efficient way to scout was to leave my house at 3:30



in the morning which would put me in the middle of my unit by the time it was light enough to see. I would glass for an hour or two before it started to get hot and head back home in time to get a full day of work in. I was finding sheep and lots of sheep almost every trip, but I was not finding the mature rams I was looking for.

On Sunday June 19th, Father's Day I took my oldest son Caden with me to go scout. We got a late start and did not get into the heart of the unit until early afternoon so the plan was to just drive around in the comfort of the air conditioner and spend some quality time with him. We drove to one of the only spots where you can glass the canyon from the truck and got out the spotting scope and binos. No sooner did I sit down on the scorching hot rocks did I have a band of ewes, lambs and two immature rams in my binos. "Sheep I whispered to Caden. Where dad where? Across the canyon on the rim." A few moments later Caden says, "dad those are big rams." I said, "no they are small and young." He says, "No dad those four are really big." I was only looking at two young rams so I said, "Where are you looking and he points up canyon and says over there dad in the shade under the rocks." As I panned over a smile came across my face as four mature rams came into view laying in the shade doing their best to stay out of the 100 degree heat. One ram in particular stood out as he dwarfed the other three in size and stature. As we sat there and watched, I knew this was the ram I wanted hang my tag on. Was he the biggest in the unit who knows, but the fact that my son was the one who found him and on Father's Day of all days made him special. The sun and hot rocks finally got the better of us and we headed towards home. The whole way Caden was trying to come up with a fitting name for



the ram he had found but none seemed to fit.

Over the next couple weeks I would make my bi-weekly banzai runs down to the desert. I scouted the entire unit eliminating areas where there were no rams and learning as much as I could about the rams I did find. I kept tabs on Caden's ram as I started to call him and found that every week or so he would disappear for a few days and then turn back up in the canyon he called home. I could never figure out where he went on the days I couldn't find him but he would eventually show back up in the same canyon Caden first found him. The summer flew by and before I knew it opening day was fast approaching. Plans were made and a friend of mine Marcus would be accompanying me on my hunt to help glass and hopefully pack meat. Jason another friend would be along as well for the hunt. My plan was to hunt the first three days of the season before I needed to leave town for a week for work and then I had a NM elk hunt booked, so that would leave me the last week of the season if needed.

With the trucks loaded up we headed down to the unit on Saturday morning two days before the opener. I wanted to make sure we located Caden's ram and were ready for opening morning. After we got camp set up we headed out to find sheep. As we got to my favorite spot to glass for Caden's ram my heart sank as there were two cots set up on the edge of the canyon. I knew right then one of the other tag holders had found the same ram. Never did I see another person down there all summer during my fifteen or so scouting trips and here we are two days before the season opens and someone is camped right on top of him. No one was around so we got behind the spotters and started our search. Within a short time I found him about a mile away out on top of the canyon feeding with a smaller ram. Marcus also found a different ram that I had never seen that would make for a good plan B if needed.

I was excited that I had found Caden's ram but was frustrated knowing that another hunter had most likely found him as well. On the way back to camp in the dark we ran into the owners of the two cots an outfitter and one of his guides. They had gotten there

the night before and it was their first time they had been down here all summer. The outfitter said that his hunter would be getting in the day before the hunt and they planned on hunting the big ram they found near their camp. I said, "I have been watching that ram for two and a half months so I will be hunting him as well."

Sunday morning we went to get a better look at Caden's ram as Marcus had not yet gotten a good look at him. We set up a thousand yards or so away from where we put him to bed the night before and sure enough just as you could start to see we found him and his buddy up feeding on the flat above the canyon. We watched him for a few hours and put him to bed for his afternoon nap in the shade of a cliff. I told Marcus the story of how Caden had found this ram and that is why I wanted to hunt him so badly. The sun finally forced us off the rocks and seek shade back at camp. We started to make plans for opening morning and how we best thought to hunt him. Marcus turns to me and says, "FDR." I said, "What." Marcus says, "FDR Father's Day Ram." Soon it was time to head back out for the evening glassing session. Marcus and I split up I would go keep eyes on FDR and Marcus would go try to turn up the ram he found the night before just to keep a second option open. For the life of me I could not turn up FDR where we had left him bedded a few hours earlier. As the last of the days light started to fade I saw the two rams crest the top of the canyon on the far side heading away and heading away fast. They were making tracks and leaving the country. I sat there in disbelief and confused as to what spooked them. Was it possibly a cat down in the canyon, was it the fact that the outfitter had camped right on top of the rim for the last two days above where he had lived all summer? I was frustrated and couldn't believe the ram I had watched all summer was disappearing right in front of me one day before opening day.

Mondays plan was to hike in the four or so miles to the drainage FDR was headed towards the night before. We started early as temps were supposed to hit 100 degrees that day and we had a long hike ahead of us. We were able to find another good ram that day in the main canyon but we never did find FDR. That evening we returned to the canyon that FDR called home to see if he had circled back but was unable to turn him up. That night back at camp while I was getting ready for the next day going over maps and organizing gear I knew I had a decision to make. Do I keep looking for FDR or go after one of the other rams we had found. Knowing I only had three days to hunt and then would have to wait a few weeks before I could make it back down I made the decision to go after the ram we found this morning and try to get a better look at him. So on to plan B.

Opening morning found us up early and getting everything loaded and ready for the day. After the

hour or so bumpy ride in the Polaris we pulled up to where we would start our hike into the canyon. As I threw my pack over my shoulder I notice a guy walking up the hill towards us in the dark. Turns out it is one of the guides for the other hunter. He explains to us that the outfitter and his client went to the other side of the canyon and he is going to glass from this side and walk him into the same ram we were going after. So much for plan B. Well I didn't have a plan C so now what I think to myself. A bit of panic starts to set in as it is an hour before daylight on opening morning on my once in a lifetime California Bighorn sheep hunt and I don't have a ram to hunt. After countless hours in the field looking over rams all summer her I sit opening morning with no plan. As I rack my brain on where we can get before daylight I remember a group of rams I had found a few weeks back about two miles south of our location. We take off at a fast pace southbound. As we get to the edge of the canyon we slow our pace and take our time peering over the edge every few hundred feet in hopes of turning up the band of rams. Around mid-morning we had yet to turn up the band of rams, but had found two rams one which looked to be a good ram in a side canyon across the main canyon about a mile away. It was difficult with the heat waves to get a good look at him but knew he was worth a closer look at some point.

We headed back to the Polaris to recharge our batteries and figure out an evening hunt. I made the decision to head back and see if we could find FDR. By the time we got to our glassing spot the winds had picked up and were blowing twenty to thirty miles per hour and temps were in excess of 100 degrees. We were sitting in a giant convection oven. Conditions were so bad you couldn't even glass. We found ourselves back at camp before dark exhausted and frustrated. I knew I needed to stay positive and had told myself I wanted this hunt to be fun and not stressful but at that moment it was tough not feel discouraged. We ate a good meal and headed to bed without much talk of what the mornings plan was going to be. Although it was the only thing on my mind.

Up early again I told the guys I wanted to head to the opposite side of the canyon and get a better look at the ram we had spotted the day before. It would be a long trip around and an even longer hike in from that side but was the only way to access that side canyon. Marcus informed me that he would have to head for home around noon that day as his daughter had a volleyball game. Although a little disappointed I understood. So we decided it would be best if he stayed on the close side of the canyon to see if he could glass up the ram and walk us into him. We finally made it to the edge of the side canyon where I thought we needed to be just as the sun was starting to come up. The canyon was void of any sign of the rams. We continued to work our way towards the



main canyon dropping off the first level of rocky cliffs. This would put us just above the same level the rams were on the previous day. As we made our way to the main canyon Marcus let us know there was a group of rams in front and below us. We quickly and quietly made our way up to the edge of the main canyon not knowing exactly where the sheep were below us. At this point I could feel the adrenaline start pumping. Was this really about to happen, was this going to be the end of the journey that had consumed my life for the last few months.

Peering over the rim I knew the rams had to be close but I couldn't locate them I scanned to the left and to the right and nothing. Easing up closer to the cliffs edge I caught movement below me directly below me. The four rams were oblivious to my position as they milled around in the rocks below. I looked them over through my binos confirming the heavy horned, battle scared, broomed off ram was the one I wanted to take. He stood in the middle of the group closest to the next series of cliffs below which led to the bottom of the canyon. Jason whispered shoot him for 80 yards. The rams were more like 250 yards below but the angle was almost straight down. The trigger broke to my surprise and the ram dropped in place, I anchored him with a second shot to keep him from kicking himself over the cliff to the bottom of the canyon. Marcus was able to watch the whole encounter and headed our way. About two hours later Marcus showed up just as I loaded the last load into my pack to haul up and out of the canyon. At the top we loaded the packs up and each downed a bottle of water and started the pack out.

All the 3 A.M. scouting trips, the hundreds of miles logged in my truck, the countless hours of glassing, the endless hot sweaty dusty days had all paid off. Even though the hunt had not even lasted two days I felt satisfied. With all the days I had spent in the desert this summer knowing that all those hours spent scouting were just as important as the hunt itself and a huge component to my success. Although the ram I killed wasn't FDR I had succeed in completing my pipe dream and couldn't be happier.

ARE WILDLIFE WATER DEVELOPMENTS A CAUSE OF ENTRAPMENT OR MORTALITY?

by Vernon C. Bleich, Ph.D.

In recent issues of California Wild Sheep, I summarized information on both water quality and predation, and whether either of them are major concerns associated with wildlife water developments. In this brief article, I want to provide an update on our knowledge of whether such developments present a risk to wildlife, either through risk of entrapment or drowning. As in the past, this review is based largely on earlier work published jointly with my coauthors—Nova Simpson and Kelley Stewart of the University of Nevada Reno.

Wildlife water developments present a risk of drowning if wildlife become entrapped and cannot escape. To the best of my knowledge, the largest single such event that has been documented involved 13 bighorn sheep that drowned in a water storage tank located at Old Dad Peak in the Mojave Desert, California. Such events are rare, but demonstrate the importance of the placement of holding tanks and the need to ensure the structural integrity of those tanks. In the event noted, the individuals that drowned could access the tops of the tanks, and fell in when the manhole cover became dislodged; unfortunately, the animals could not escape through the manhole. Because of that, investigators noted that, "...access to the tank tops by bighorn sheep can be prevented by placement of the ... tanks away from ledges or rocks" and a protective platform can be added to the top of storage tanks can prevent bighorn sheep from breaking through or causing the tank to collapse.

If entrapment within water developments was a common occurrence, animal remains should be regularly found within water developments. Several investigators have studied desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), a species that cannot swim, with respect to the risk

of entrapment in water developments. Although one such investigator reported the remains of desert tortoises in some "small game guzzlers," he could not determine the cause(s) of death. Further, the hypothesis that wildlife water developments are a substantial source of mortality for desert tortoise has not been supported by the results of the very detailed investigations that have been carried out. Indeed, very few remains of tortoises have been reported in water developments, indicating that water developments do not present a significant risk to that species. Indeed, wildlife water developments have been identified as compatible with tortoise recovery efforts by three agencies, and have been an important habitat management technique for mountain sheep, mule deer, and numerous other desert species for

many decades. To the best of our knowledge, no agency charged with tortoise conservation has developed any policy against wildlife water developments in tortoise habitat in California, nor has construction in tortoise habitat in Arizona been controversial. The Arizona

Game and Fish Department has constructed >800 water sources, and no tortoise mortalities associated with those wildlife water developments have been recorded.

Other extensive reviews of the pertinent literature have concluded that negative impacts associated with entrapment or drowning in water developments are not supported by available data and remain largely speculative. One investigation revealed that most skeletal remains recovered showed a high degree of breakage consistent with predation or scavenging by mammals or birds. Other investigators have hypothesized that remains retrieved from wildlife water developments likely came from scat deposited nearby, or pellets cast by birds of prey. Quantification of faunal remains found in or near water sources is not a reliable index of predation or drowning events, and can only be determined by direct observation or necropsy. Although risks of entrapment have been reported to be insignificant, water developments are typically fitted with escape ramps to prevent drowning by wildlife that attempts to make use of those water sources. All available evidence leads this author to conclude that neither entrapment nor drowning are commonplace, and certainly do not offset the value of water developments and their contributions to wildlife conservation.

—Dr. Vern Bleich is an independent wildlife biologist who worked for the California Department of Fish and Game for 34 years. He currently resides in Bismarck, ND but remains active in the conservation and management of bighorn sheep and other large mammals inhabiting arid landscapes throughout the western United States. He serves as an advisor to several nongovernmental organizations, and to the Bureau of Land Management as a member of the Montana-Dakotas Resource Advisory Council. In the interest of conserving space, the citations referenced in this article have not been included. Interested parties can, however, request those references, or the review paper upon which this article is based by contacting Vern (vcbleich@gmail.com) directly.



2017 SHEEP SHOW: RECORDS, RECORDS AND MORE RECORDS

by Kyle Meintzer



If you missed this year's Sheep Show you missed an event which broke all records.

This is the fourth consecutive year WSF's convention set new records. And it did so by every metric imaginable! Here are some examples:

Thursday night banquet:
1,200 attendees vs. 800 in 2016.

Friday night banquet:
Sold Out! 1,200 attendees vs. 800 in 2016.

Saturday night banquet:
Sold Out! 1,700 attendees vs. 1,300 in 2016.

Life Members' Breakfast:
786 attendees vs. 499 in 2016 and 265 in 2015.

<1 Club; Over 1,000 attendees vs. 900 in 2016.
Amazingly, 400 of them signed up at the Sheep Show!

Attendance at the show also set a new record, despite the weather related travel problems that kept a lot of Californians from attending.

Net Revenue: Not all the bills are in yet but we expect at least a 10% gain vs. 2016.

Other Highlights Included:

A brand new event, the Backpack Trail race, was a huge hit and a new WSF tradition has begun. We fully expect to sell out our registration objectives for the 2018 race and we expect it will be sold out very quickly.

Jim Shockey's talk and video presentation at the Life Member's Breakfast had people literally laughing so hard they were crying. But perhaps even more exciting was that Mr. Shockey volunteered his time to do it even though he's otherwise a paid speaker.

He told WSF he had become so impressed with what we have been doing over the past few years that he wanted to do what he could to help.

The California Desert Bighorn Sheep Permit sold Friday night for an incredible \$235,000, smashing the old record of \$170,000! The buyer was none other than Jason Hairston, a Californian and the founder of KUIU. Jason said he bought the permit because he wanted to help California's wild sheep and also because he wanted to finish his FNAWS in his home state.



Finally, the New York Times sent a reporter and a photographer to The Sheep Show and on Thursday, February 16th published a lengthy feature article in their sport's section about wild sheep conservation, WSF, and the importance of fundraising permits, replete with many photos.

I'd run into their photographer on Saturday and asked her why they were there. Her answer was, "We've heard a lot about you and we want to learn more."

To read the article in full, go here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/16/sports/bighorn-sheep-hunting.html>.

Finally, the word from Jim Shockey when he attended the Life Member's Breakfast at the SCI convention shortly after The Sheep Show, was that the Sheep Show was the topic of the day. People were saying, "WSF is growing like crazy when the other sportsman's organizations have flat-lined."

Whatever you do, be sure to attend the 2018 'Sheep Show' in Reno, January 18-20!

The 'Sheep Show' is the Greatest Show on Earth if you support conservation!



Many CA WSF Members won awards this year!



CALIFORNIA DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP HARVEST

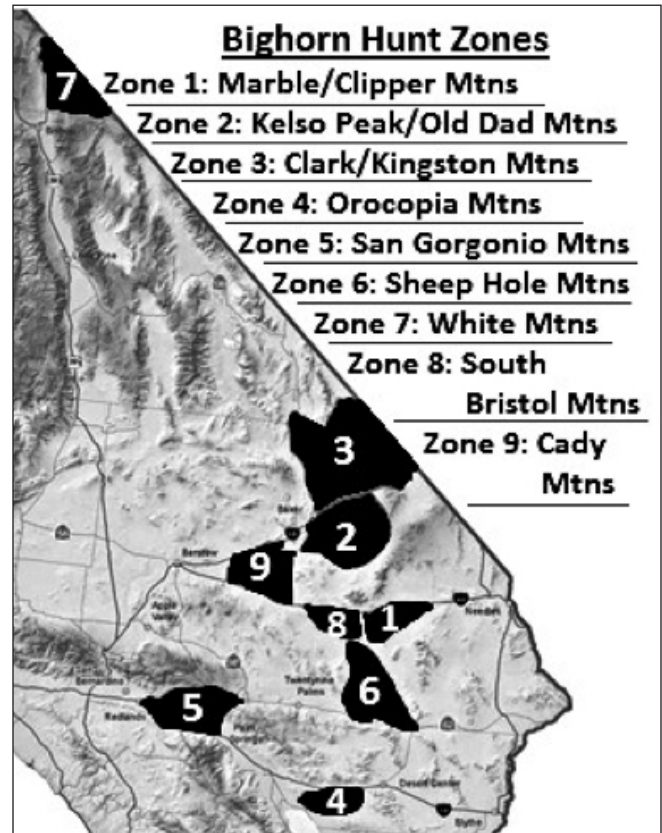
by Rick Ianniello

The 2016-2017 California desert bighorn sheep hunting season wrapped up in early February. As with the rest of the state, the winter in the desert proved unusually wet. 3.3 inches of rain fell at the Barstow-Daggett airport in December and January alone, compared to an average annual rainfall of 3.9 inches. This damp weather encouraged rams to wander and likely drenched a few hunters, but even the soggiest of tag holders persevered, and everyone ended the winter season successfully. The largest ram came out of the Orocopia Mountains with a green-score of 178 ¼ inches.

Each time a ram is harvested in California, the hunter checks in with a California Department of Fish & Wildlife employee who plugs a horn to mark it as legal, and records data related to the animal and the successful hunt. We now have two decades of these data, which provide some interesting trends for bighorn sheep hunts in California.

Hunt Zone:	Average Green-score:	Largest Green-score:
1: Marble and Clipper Mountains	160 ¼"	182 ¾"
2: Old Dad Peak, Kelso, and Marl Mountains	158 ½"	184 ¼"
3: Clark, Kingston, and Mesquite Mountains	160 ½"	175"
4: Orocopia Mountains	165 ½"	186"
5: San Gorgonio Mountains	169 ¼"	180 ⅞"
6: Sheep Hole Mountains	147 ⅞"	158 ¼"
7: White Mountains	160 ½"	179 ⅜"
8: South Bristol Mountains	155 ⅞"	170 ⅜"
9: Cady Mountains	159 ¼"	173 ¾"

The first of these trends shows that all hunt zones are not created equal. While the Orocopia Mountains produced the state record green-score of 186 inches, sheep in the San Gorgonio Mountains scored high more consistently than any other range, averaging 169 ¼ inches. With notoriously rugged terrain and a reputation for smaller sized sheep, the Sheep Hole Mountains produced rams with the smallest horns. Perhaps fortunately for those looking to bring home a big ram, there has not been enough of a population in the Sheep Hole Mountains to sustain hunting since the 2013-2014 season.



Hunt Party Size	Average Green-score:	Largest Green-score:
1 to 2	157 ⅜"	183 ¾"
3 to 5	160 ½"	186"
6 to 8	162 ¼"	180 ⅞"
9+	166 ⅞"	180 ½"

The data also show that a bigger party might mean a bigger ram, even if experience, preparation, and luck are more important. It is likely that large parties often included professional guides, which help a great deal in the first two of those areas. Twenty years of data show that the green-score goes up an average of almost one inch per member of the hunt party. So a hunter looking for a ram with a nice set of horns may want to bring along some friends, or hire a guide.

Table 3: Average and Largest Green-score by Year		
Years:	Average Green-score:	Largest Green-score:
1997-2001	157 ¼"	169 ¾"
2001-2005	158 ⅝"	184 ¼"
2005-2009	159 ⅝"	179 ⅜"
2009-2013	160 ⅞"	186"
2013-2017	162 ½"	182 ¾"

Last, the data show that over the past twenty years, green-scores for California bighorn hunts have been on the rise! Though the state record was harvested back in 2011, the average green-score for our harvested rams has been increasing by over ¼ inch per year. It may be difficult to tease out the exact reasons behind this trend, but it's certainly not bad news for hunters.



*A group of rams in the Cady Mountains.
Photo by Regina Abella.*

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR YOUR 2017 HUNT

by Jon Kruger

One of the most common things I hear from hunting guides is that more often than not clients don't come prepared. I hear this from them all the time and it usually prompts a story of a recent client that shows up in flip flops, hasn't shot their gun since the day they sighted it in or that they are on a mountain hunt and not in sheep shape. And yes, I did show up to a 10 day Mt. goat/ moose hunt this year wearing flip flops; I also had matching silver dollar sized blisters on my heels. A day before the hunt a short hike turned into a 10 mile hike and my cowboy boots made short work to my feet. Despite having heels wrapped in tape each day I never once let it slow me down. None the less, I could have been smarter and more prepared!

It sounds so simple but we all do it! We are busy people and for the most part the gym and other prep isn't always our first priority. It really should be though when you think about the time and money we spend on some of these hunts. Some of the best preparation for mountain hunts is simply hiking; consider routinely going out and hitting the trails to build stamina. We are lucky to live in the state of California where 52% of the state is public land and holds thousands of miles of trails. Load up your pack with weight and get your legs and lungs in shape. When you feel like you are ready for the next step load up your pack with a bag of concrete and hit the hills. Strive to be in such good shape that you feel just as energetic on the last day of the hunt as I did on the first. A little hard work before your hunt is going to

make the trip more enjoyable and will increase your chance at success.

Match your hunt plans to your preparation plans. If you are going on an ibex hunt in Kyrgyzstan you better be in good enough shape to hike 14,000' tall mountains as well as have experience with high altitudes. Over half of the country is over 8,000' elevation; do you know how well your body acclimates to high attitude? If you have never been in high elevation mountains you won't know how your body reacts until you try it! And you won't want to experience it for the first time when you are almost 7 thousand miles away from home. Once again, lucky you live in California! There are 12 mountains over 14 thousand foot elevation as well as endless trail access. Head out to the mountains and see how your body acclimates to lower oxygen levels well in advance of setting up a high mountain hunt. In 2015, I hunted in Kyrgyzstan and the group that had arrived the week before me stayed for only one day out of their 10 day hunt. One of the hunters experienced altitude sickness so extreme that they had to load up all their gear in the middle of the night and head back to town 5 hours away. Imagine flying for 20+ hours, driving 12 hours from Bishkek to the Tian Shan Mountains and then having to turn right back around a day later because your hunting partner got altitude sickness.

When was the last time you shot your rifle? In 2016, I went on several hunts and saw multiple people unloading multiple magazines at game with no avail. Sometimes you only get one shot so make it count.

Practice so you can increase your chance at success as well as your ability to harvest game in the most ethical manor possible. If you are going out hunting for game like marco polo in open country good luck with getting closer than 500 yards from a ram without them spotting you. Most shots are 500 yards and beyond; you better be ready! A well-built rifle, turret scope and hand loaded ammo tuned to your rifle goes a long way! Know your ballistics and compensate for the below zero temps you might encounter as well as the high elevation.

Make the 2017 hunting season your most successful year yet by preparing for all the adventures that lie in front of you. You never know when your name will finally be drawn for a sheep tag, this could be the year! Use your time wisely to dial in your rifle and be in shape for climbing mountains; hunting season will be here before you know it.

GLASSING TIPS

by Craig Van Arsdale

The single best thing you can do to up the amount of game you spot is mounting your binoculars on a tripod! In my opinion, This is the most overlooked technique in glassing. Without the ability to stabilize your binoculars on a tripod you will literally miss two to three times the game as the Guy/Gal next to you that does. By stabilizing the image and being able to methodically scan the entire field of view before moving on to the next will allow you to catch that flicker of the ear or movement of antler reflected from the sun, the re positioning of a leg etc. All things that are very difficult to see while trying to stabilize your binoculars by hand. Ask yourself how many times a friend or guide has tried to describe where the animal is and you are looking right at it but don't see it until it takes a step or walks several feet? Often times you will pick the animal up right away when utilizing your tripod.

Because not all binoculars come with the ability to be mounted to a tripod from the factory i recommend you give "The Outdoorsmans" Located in Phoenix, AZ a call 1-800-291-8065 They are the experts in optics and can get you on the right track no matter what type of glass your own. They also offer what i believe to be the best system for attaching your binoculars to a tripod. For the record. I have no affiliation with them just believe in their product and service and like supporting small business when i can.

For some of you that don't always carry a tripod i'm sure you're cringing at the thought of carrying extra weight in your pack but i assure you the extra few pounds is worth it. If you're already carrying the weight of the tripod then adding the extra few ounces to mount your binos to your tripod is a no brainer. Making our glass work for us is smart hunting and saves our legs and lungs for the stalk!

The second best thing is to practice PATIENCE. Think how hard you look for that animal that you know is there, the one your hunting partner is trying to describe its location to you. We often sit down to



look over an area and after a few quick scans convince ourselves there is no game and move on. How hard would you look if someone queued you in that there is a large buck in the basin already? Hours i'd guess! Or your hunting partner just had a big buck spotted but lost it when it bedded in a patch of timber? A rule of thumb i like to use is that when glassing with my binoculars on a tripod or even using my spotter to glass i like to use the same grid scanning system as i do when scanning a hillside (Left to Right Top to Bottom) but inside the field of view of each movement of my glass to a new field of view. To make sure i'm exercising patience i like to spend roughly 30 seconds minimum scanning each field of view to insure i have thoroughly covered the area and allowed time to pick up those small movements that are often the giveaway to an animal's location. Patience isn't an easy skill to acquire but in time it will pay dividends. Not many things are guaranteed in life but i can confidently say that if you put these tips to use in the field you will certainly spot more game!

TULE ELK OF THE GABILAN MOUNTAINS

*Purchased at the CAWSF Fundraiser
by Steve Hopkins*

Two years ago I was introduced to Donald C. Martin by my taxidermist Aaron Armstrong because I was looking for a Tule Elk. Don hunts on the 8000 acre Jim Bardin Ranch owned by Bob Swanson. The ranch has been in his family for generations, located in the Gabilan Mountains just east of Salinas. The Tule Elk were reintroduced there in the '80s and have flourished in this area roaming these beautiful mountains just off Monterrey Bay and the Salinas Valley.

We glassed from a lookout that overlooks the bay and valley, and saw elk every day.

The terrain is spectacular with wooded and brushed valleys, and open grasslands and benches as well as rocky mountain tops. It is spectacular and beautiful country with open vistas where elk can be spotted from miles away. We used a spotting scope after locating the elk with binoculars, and Don did a great job of evaluating the trophy bulls.

The first day, we identified two or three good bulls, but Don felt we could do better.

Both Bob and Don hunted with me every day, and we stayed at the ranch's deer club facility which was founded in 1941. It is located in a valley among sycamore trees on the Gabilan River. The old deer camp has an outdoor covered kitchen and some small cabins for sleeping. We kept the fire pit going full time and used a grill over the pit to barbecue. Don and Bob did a great job of cooking with no shortage of food and cookies.

This is a really great free range hunt on an historic working cattle ranch with engaging conversation and companionship provided by Don and Bob. On the third day Bob spotted two bulls, and through the spotting scope we saw that one was very good. Don made a plan to go for the bigger bull. We could follow their progress as the two left the grazing area to bed down.

We decided to try a stalk into the wind from below. As we got close to where they were bedded down, we were busted by a black tail deer which may have caused the bulls to move. Don cut their trail and we again had favorable wind. We located the smaller bull, but not the larger one. We didn't want to disturb the area too much so we backed out.

That evening we saw them again making their way to feed on a higher grassy bench. We decided to try to intercept them in the morning as they returned to their daytime bedding area.

We set up in the morning and waited to no avail. We snuck to the edge of the ridge and discovered them bedded down in the same area as the day before. We made the decision to set up early in the afternoon to try to catch them coming out to feed in the evening.



Don Martin with Steve Hopkins' 2016 tule elk.

Don thought they would show up around 4:50 pm.

We built a brush blind and waited. At 4:58 the big bull showed up and we took him. He is a beautiful complete 6x6 bull. The third try was a charm. Don did a great job of patterning these bulls and setting up in the right location.

This is a great hunt which I would highly recommend. Don and Bob were great companions and the ranch is spectacular. They really take good care of their hunters and do an outstanding job of finding the best bull available. I would recommend this hunt to anybody looking for a great Tule Elk. Feel free to call me with any questions.

**A recent study has found that
women who carry a little extra
weight live longer than the men
who mention it.**

MOUNTAIN GOAT

by Craig Van Arsdale



This adventure began in the spring of 2015. After attending the annual Wild Sheep Foundation “Sheep Show” as I do every year in January (I highly recommend it if you’ve never been). I had spoken with several outfitters with the intent of booking an archery Mountain Goat hunt. The hunt we ended up settling on would be a 14 day horseback Goat/Moose combo hunt in very far Northern BC in 2016. I was lucky enough to draw and harvest a nice Shiras Moose in Idaho in 2014 but I really wanted a moose with my bow and my hunting partner Jon Kruger was chomping at the bit for an opportunity at a big bull as well so we elected to take the combo option.

Fast forward to September 2016 and it was time for Jon and I to pack our bags! This would be my first guided hunt and first time hunting Mountain Goats.

We elected to drive to BC in the hopes that we would both harvest game and be able to take home as much meat as possible! We brought my chest freezer from home to allow us for plenty of room and we could stop and plug it in on the 36 hour drive each way to keep the meat cold.

Our first stop was Banff National Park where we stopped to check out Lake Louise. What a sight!

We arrived at the hunting lodge on the 27th where we checked the zero on our rifles and shot our bows one last time. That night we met the other hunters that would be hunting other areas during the next 14 days, had drinks and laughs with new friends and ate Moose steaks for dinner before doing a final check and packing of all of our gear for the morning.

The next day was our travel day into camp. Which consisted of a 35 kilometer quad ride to where we would meet the horses and from there we saddled up the ponies and went another 20 or so kilometers to reach our wall tent base camp deep into the mountains of BC. I hadn’t ridden a horse since I was fourteen and the soreness of my groin and hips after

that first ride was a good reflection of my hiatus.

The plan was to focus on Moose for the first few days as the Moose rut was winding down and our opportunity for a good archery encounter with a bull would lessen as the hunt unfolded. Meanwhile we would also keep an eye out though for Goats as they would typically be in the same country just much higher. Each morning we would saddle up the horses and head either up river or down river stopping to call and gain elevation on glassing points in hopes of spotting a shooter bull. The Moose weren’t hard to find but a shooter bull had yet to show himself.

On day three Jon and his guide grabbed a few days of gear and headed north to an area where they would spike out from the horses in hopes of finding a shooter bull or a billy up high in the rocks.

Day four came and me and my guide decided to take a walk down the river and slowly cow call as we made our way down. We had heard a bull grunting the day before down river but never did see him. About a mile down the river my guide was glassing the cliffs to our right and spotted a couple goats. We set up the spotter for a quick look and one of the goats looked like taking a closer look. The location the goats were in was also looking like it could be possible to pull off an archery stalk. We bucked brush through the willows and up onto a bench to get a closer look with the spotter. After looking through the spotter to determine if we wanted to commit to the stalk we decided it was a stalk worth the effort.

We went around the back side of the cliff the goats were on and gained elevation until we were only about three hundred feet below them and out of site. I off loaded my pack and my guide wished me luck as I made the final stalk alone.

As I came over the top of the cliff I started to realize just how steep it really was where the goats were bedded. It was literally straight down and one wrong step would likely be a fatal mistake! I started inching my way out onto each pinnacle I could find and peaking over the edge in hopes of spotting the goats below. On the fourth attempt there they were! Up and feeding now and at 64 yards and a 60 degree shot angle. They were right in the open and had no idea I was there but that angle was just way too steep and I wasn’t confident I could make such a shot at that distance.

I waited the goats out and after about 30 min of feeding they made their way into the avalanche chute to my left and started slowly feeding up towards me. Eventually the target goat fed up to what my rangefinder said was 55 yards at a 50 degree angle. I knew my rangefinder would not tell me the

truth at this steep of an angle (even with the angle compensation) so I cut 5 yards off of that and dialed my sight for 50 yards. Slightly quartering away I slowly drew my bow and attempted to settle the pin on the goat's vitals... I couldn't though. The angle I was drawing from and my shooting position was forcing my bow cam directly into the rock I was shooting from and would surely grenade my bow if I were to shoot. Trying to remain calm and not be seen I slowly let the bow down and repositioned my body to attempt another time. Same result! Too steep to shoot from the sitting position I was in and I was getting more and more exposed as I tried to inch myself up to clear the rock. I let down again.

At this point my nerves were not calm anymore! I decided I would hunker down and calm myself before waiting for the goat to put its head down again to feed, then I would stand up and draw as I leaned back against the rock behind me to clear my bow limb from the rock below. That was the trick and soon enough I was settling my pin on the goat's vitals, the shot went off and I watched my arrow sail just over its back... The goat didn't even budge just looked around confused. Surprised at the miss and in the moment I loaded another arrow and executed the exact same result as before! The goat jumped forward a couple feet this time and I came to my senses that I must not be cutting enough yardage for the angle. I dialed my sight to 45 and executed the third shot. This time my arrow flew perfectly into the goat's vitals passing straight through and smashing into the rocks beneath. The goat lunged forward at the impact of my arrow and didn't even make it 30 yards before tumbling down the chute into a patch of alders that stopped it from going all the way to the bottom! I couldn't believe it!

I went back to get my guide and tell him the good news! We spent the rest of the day packing back to camp and taking care of the hide. All with just a couple bars in our packs and very little water. It was just supposed to be a little hike down river after all right?

We got word that night on the SAT phone that Jon had also tagged out on a goat and they would need the wrangler to meet them with the horses the following afternoon.

We spent the next ten days hunting hard for moose and battling the weather. We saw lots of moose but all were sub legal bulls except for one that we literally spotted hanging out in goat country. We made a play on him right at dark but got up to where he was with just 30 min of light left and he was gone.

Jon and his guides persistence payed off on day 12 and Jon was able to shoot a good bull with his rifle. I hunted hard till the last day and ultimately ate tag soup for moose.

The hunt was a huge success and a true adventure which is exactly what I wanted. We rode horses



around the mountains for 14 days in some absolutely epic country, the horses rarely did a single thing I asked them to..... We rode horses back in the dark many nights in the complete pitch black dark, crossing rivers and streams, we tested our bodies physically making multiple stalks several thousand feet in elevation just to go right back down and do it again, we met new friends and told old stories back at camp every night. I do it again in a heartbeat!

Sheep at the Zoo

A policeman in the big city stops a man in a car with a bighorn sheep in the front seat. "What are you doing with that bighorn sheep?" He exclaimed, "You should take it to the zoo."

The following week, the same policeman sees the same man with the same ram again in the front seat, this time both of them wearing sunglasses.

The policeman pulls him over. "I thought you were going to take that bighorn sheep to the zoo!"

The man replied, "I did. We had such a good time we are going to the beach this weekend!"



SINDH IBEX, PAKISTAN

by Jon Kruger

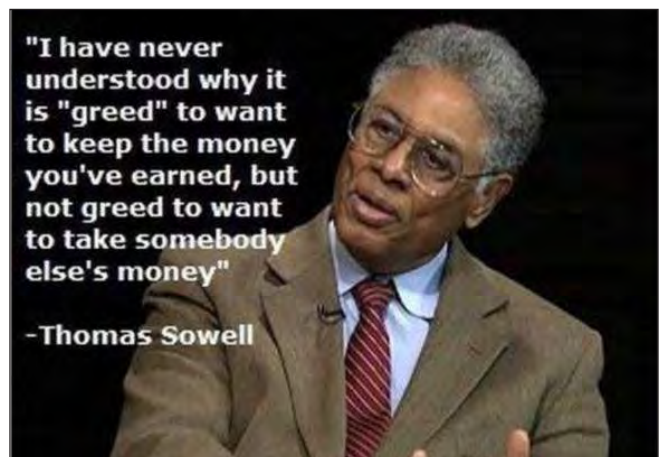


A nanny feeding 5 yards away suddenly knew something was wrong and her senses heightened. At the same time I noticed the wind changing directions in the canyons as I lay behind a bush waiting for the chance to arrow a passing billy. She soon was locked onto me. The rest of the herd was making their way down the rock cliffs and quickly realized her apprehension and raised awareness. The gig was up, they set off running in every direction. More ibex kept coming down the cliffs but were cautious and took alternate routes far out of range. Bringing up the rear minutes later came the last of the group, 4 billies. Luckily for me they were far enough back in the rocks and hadn't seen the front of the group run off. They headed down the rock cliffs making their way along a ridge in my direction. They were jumping from rock to rock as they hastily made their way back to the group; which, by this time had vanished out of sight around the rocky cliffs. With an arrow knocked I was almost ready. I slowly raised up my rangefinder to check the distance. They were at 60 yards and about to keep getting further as they skipped from rock to rock. It was time! I clipped in my release, drew back and slowly turned positioning to take the shot. With my sight pin right behind the shoulder of the biggest billy I squeezed my thumb release sending the arrow through the air. Time stood still as the arrow made its way over a small valley and up to the rock wall where the billy was traveling. He was quartering away and as he made his way along the ridge the arrow struck him. He jumped to the next rock and soon found it hard to maintain his balance. He made it to some loose rock and stumbled, trying to stay up. I hadn't compensated for him walking and the arrow hit him farther back than planned; I quickly knocked another arrow and sealed the deal. The locals that were helping with the hunt had been watching from the next ridge. They cheered with excitement when they saw the Ibex



finally take its last steps. They had never seen archery equipment before much less an arrow sail through the air and hit an ibex at 60 yards.

Sindh Ibex is my 5th Capra species and was a memorable adventure to say the least. With currently no entries in the SCI record book for Sindh ibex taken with a bow this should be the first entry. This hunt was truly a team effort and would have never been possible without the help of the local villagers spotting and assisting with stalks. Even though I was only in Pakistan for a short while, the friends I gained and memories made will last a lifetime. I am already planning a trip to go back to the northern region for Himalayan ibex and might be back next year to tag along on a friend's Markhor hunt. There are 9 Capra and Ovis species in Pakistan, consider making this a destination on your quest for one of the world slams.





RUN FASTER THAN A PRONGHORN TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AND BID ON THIS HUNT!

Are you tired of waiting to draw your antelope in Nevada? In 2016, your odds were about 250:1! Or, even worse, you drew and now you are on the 5-year waiting plan.

Here's the answer. This special Nevada pronghorn hunt, on auction at the May 6th Fund-raiser, includes a landowner tag not just for the private ranch that it was assigned to but ALL of Unit 35. This unit is northwest of Winnemucca, Nevada and is well known for Boone & Crockett level antelope.

Cody Brinkerhoff, a master guide in Nevada, was born and raised in this country. Cody has personally guided for sheep, elk, deer, and antelope throughout the state. When Cody acquired this great tag he decided to donate the tag to CA WSF and to guide the 5-day hunt as well.

The lucky buyer will be able to choose either rifle or archery for the 2017 antelope season. The country you will be hunting was Cody's playground growing up and he knows about as much about these hills as the goats. Board member Ken Crother has had the opportunity to hunt with Cody numerous times and can only say that each hunt has been a blast and they have harvested some great animals.





www.explorersatellite.com
www.eschunting.com

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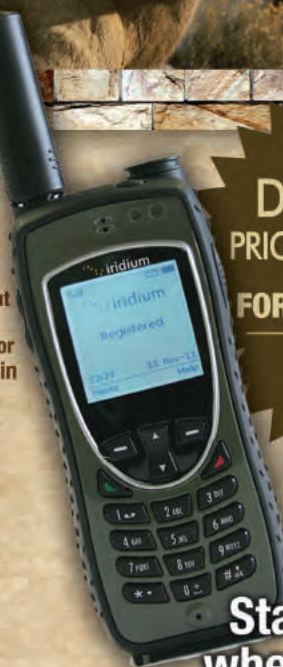
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Last Campfire



“Mr. Bighorn”
Dick Weaver

Dick Weaver, DFG (retired) suffered a stroke in January and was hospitalized in New Mexico. He appeared to be on the road to recovery however he lost his fight on February 10, 2017. He is survived by his wife, Dorris Weaver; please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

SHEEP’S CLOTHING

by Carlos Gallinger, thewayofthings.org

At first glance this looks like a desert bighorn sheep, perhaps a ewe. If we look closely will see it's much more than that. To start with the neck is too short to be a bighorn sheep yet it's about the right length for a human. Then if we look at the legs will see that it would be impossible for bighorn sheep to pose its legs in this position, though would be natural for a human being. This is a human being in sheep's clothing, that is a predator taking on the identity of the prey, in order to make it the victim. Of course this person is doing this to make a kill to feed himself and his family. Another way to understand this is he's making a kill to give life to himself and his family. These philosophical and spiritual concepts were not lost on these ancient people indeed they would've talked about them around the campfire for ages. Even today there are still a few people that sit around the campfire and talk about these things, and this will go on till the night when the last campfires goes out and these things are no more. In that time, perhaps this ancient glyph may still be there to give mute testimony to a world that no longer has understanding.





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President and CEO of
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Wildlife Branch Chief
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