

ANNUAL MEETING & FUNDRAISER

December 15-17, 2000 • Rock Springs Holiday Inn

Friday December 15, 2000

9:00 AM Board Meeting (including funding requests)
 12:00 Noon Lunch (on your own)
 1:00 PM Vendor Booths open; set up fund-raiser

Saturday December 16, 2000 continued

1:00-3:00 PM Seminars
 3:00-4:00 PM Wyoming Game and Fish Department Project/
 Status Reports
 Complimentary Wine and Cheese Tasting
 5:00 PM Happy Hour
 6:00 PM Fund-raiser/Banquet

Saturday December 16, 2000

8:00 AM General Membership Meeting
 10:00 AM General Business Meeting
 12:00 Noon Lunch (on your own)

Sunday December 17, 2000

9:00 AM Board Meeting



Wyoming Chapter
 Foundation for North American
 Wild Sheep
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 Permit No. 68

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Membership Application

I hereby make application for membership in the Wyoming Chapter F.N.A.W.S., and enclose my membership fee.

Annual Membership \$15.00
 3-Year Membership \$40.00
 Lifetime Membership \$300.00

Renewal New Member Life Member Email: _____

Name _____ Telephone # _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

City _____

Make checks payable to: Wyoming Chapter of F.N.A.W.S.

P.O. Box 845, Dubois, WY 82513

The RAMPAGE

Wyoming Chapter FNAWS

SPRING 2000



Photo by James Yule, Worland, Wyoming

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&
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of
Directors**



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307-455-2464

Lynn Stewart 12/2000
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307-455-3549

David B. Connor 12/2001
1625 W. Pershing, Riverton, WY 82501
307-856-9590

Fred Thomas 12/2001
Box 346, Meeteetse, WY 82433
307-868-2595

EDITOR'S NOTES

This is my first attempt at any sort of literary venture and I surely trust all of you will give me your support and help to make our newsletter the best possible. Please write, call, or otherwise contact me with your likes, dislikes, suggestions, and comments about our newsletter. I have tried to include items which I felt would be of interest to me if I were to pick up the paper and want to read it from cover to cover, and I want the content to appeal to you the same way.

There were 251 requests sent out for hunt reports, to all of the 1999 successful bighorn sheep applicants, and as you can see, the response has been terrific. For those of you who did correspond with me and do not see your story, do not despair, it will be in our next issue. For those of you who have not yet sent me your hunt report, and see this newsletter, this means you still have time to send it in!

Lately, there have been several articles written about photographing trophies, and the one highlight of these articles is the fact you need to remove your hat. As can be seen on some of the shots within, the shadow of the sun has hidden a happy smile.

WY FNAWS annual banquet and fundraiser auction was held in Casper in December of 1999 and greatly enjoyed by all those in attendance. These are really fun, and if you have never had the opportunity to attend, there is no doubt in my mind you would enjoy yourself. See information within for the next banquet to be held in Rock Springs in December 2000. Now, for a real treat and excitement you should attend the national FNAWS convention in Reno! Last year I somewhat sheepishly (no pun intended) asked my wife if she would like to attend a sheep hunters convention.

*When I told her it was in Reno, she allowed as how with my quarter collection she could amuse herself in the casino while I roamed the isles of hunting booths. Well, as it turned out, I don't know who spent more time where, but when this years convention rolled around, you can bet we were on the early enrollment, and there was no question **BOTH** of us were going. This year we knew many more people and naturally it was even more fun. Cindy and Connie escorted my wife, Nancy, to the "Ladies Luncheon", and no details have been forthcoming, but it must have been one hell of a good time! Ladies, are you ever going to tell?*

We are always trying to expand our membership, so if you have any friends who would be candidates, let any one of the board members know, and we will send them a copy of this newsletter. Good hunting, and may the wind always be in your face.

David B Connor

The Wyoming Chapter Newsletter is published semi-annually and your subscription is included with your paid up dues.

**WHO WILL HELP THE ELK LIVING AROUND YELLOWSTONE PARK?
WOLF PROJECTIONS**

Initial wolf plant in 1995 31 wolves

There was a 72% increase per year after 1995

In 2002 the approximate number will be 982 wolves located somewhere in Montana and Wyoming

A very conservative number of 16 ELK PER WOLF IS NEEDED TO SUSTAIN A WOLF. Current studies in Yellowstone show: 25 ELK per WOLF annually, and this does not include June calves.

ELK PROJECTIONS:	YEAR 2002	982 WOLVES
	X 16	ELK PER WOLF
	15,712	ELK TO FEED WOLVES

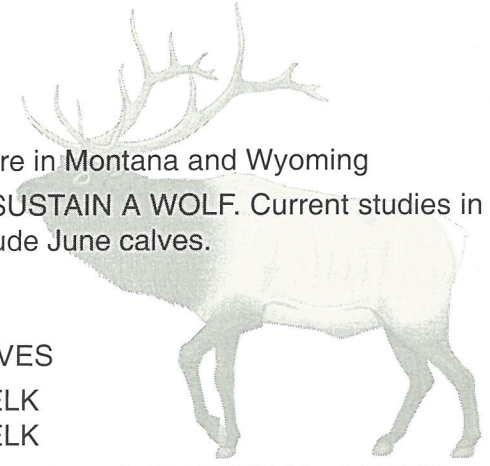
The northern ELK herd in Yellowstone Park:	1997 count 20,000 ELK
	1999 count 14,000 ELK

ELK ARE **NOT** THE ONLY PREY AFFECTED; THE YEARLY KILL BY WOLVES ON DEER IS 52 DEER PER YEAR PER WOLF.

NOT MENTIONED IS THE AFFECT WOLVES ARE HAVING ON BIG HORN SHEEP!

The above numbers for Wolf Project reports of 1997 & 98 by Dr. Charles Kay.

For further contact: Robert T. Fanning, Prey, MT. 406-333-4121



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2000 Out-of-State Sheep Application Information

***Alaska** Department of Fish and Game
Division of Wildlife Conservation
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, AK 99518-1599
Phone: 907-267-2348 ram tags
Application Deadline: May 31st
License Required: \$85 no refund
Tag: \$425 Dall Sheep
Comments: 500+ special drawing

***Arizona** Game and Fish
2222 West Greenway Road
Phoenix, AZ 85023
Phone: 602-942-3000
Application Deadline: June 15th
License Required: \$85.50
Tag: \$753 Desert or Rocky Mountain Bighorn
Comments: 30 for non-residents, non-refundable license earns bonus point if unsuccessful

***California** Department of Fish and Game
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-227-2290
Application Deadline: June 2nd
License Required: \$94.75
Tag: \$500 Desert Bighorn
Comments: license non-refundable no bonus points, only one non-res. tag

***Colorado** Division of Wildlife
6060 Broadway
Denver, CO 80216
Phone: 303-297-1192
Application Deadline: was April 7th in '99
License Required: none
Tag: \$753 includes license, Rocky Mountain Bighorn only for non-residents
Comments: unsuccessful applicants earn preference points up to 3

***Idaho** Department of Fish and Game
600 South Walnut, P.O. Box 25
Boise, ID 83707
Phone: 208-334-3700
Application Deadline: April 30th
License Required: \$101.50
Tag: \$903 Rocky Mountain or California Bighorn
Comments: license non-refundable, no bonus/preference system, cannot apply for any other controlled hunt, about 30 tags for non-residents

***Montana** Fish, Wildlife and Parks
1420 East 6th Ave.
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 406-444-2950
Application Deadline: May 1st
License Required: none
Tag: \$478 includes license, Rocky Mountain Bighorn
Comments: no bonus/preference system

***Nevada** Division of Wildlife
P.O. Box 10678
Reno, NV 89250-0022
Phone: 702-688-1500
Application Deadline: April 19th
License Required: \$111
Tag: \$800 Desert or California Bighorn
Comments: unsuccessful applicants with non-refundable license receive bonus point

***New Mexico** Dept. of Game and Fish
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Phone: 505-827-7911 or 800-862-9310
Application Deadline: April 24th
License Required: none
Tag: \$3006 Rocky Mountain or Desert Bighorn
Comments: no bonus/preference system, non-residents and residents in same drawing, must submit refundable tag fee

***North Dakota** Game and Fish Department
100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, ND 58501
Phone: 701-328-6300
Application Deadline: mid-March
License Required: none
Tag: \$500 California Bighorn
Comments: non-resident \$100 non-refundable application fee, no bonus/preference system, non-residents and residents in same draw for less than 10 permits

***Oregon** Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 59
Portland, OR 97207
Phone: 503-872-5268
Application Deadline: May 15th
License Required: \$53
Tag: \$976 Rocky Mountain or California Bighorn
Comments: submit tag fee only if drawn, no bonus/preference system, about 12 tags annually

***Utah** Division of Wildlife Resources
1596 West North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84116
Phone: 801-538-4700
Application Deadline: February 1st
License Required: none
Tag: \$1003 Desert Bighorn only
Comments: bonus point for each unsuccessful year, 2 desert rams in '99

***Washington** Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501-1091
Phone: 360-902-2200
Application Deadline: June 11th
License Required: \$150
Tag: \$360 Rocky Mountain or California Bighorn
Comments: residents and non-residents in same draw, about 15 tags annually

***Wyoming** Game & Fish Dept.
5400 Bishop Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82006
Phone: 307-777-4600
Application Deadline: February 28
Tag: \$1500 Rocky Mountain Bighorn
Comments: Applicants with maximum preference points get drawn first, second drawing for 25% of permits, 25% of permits awarded to non-residents.



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PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTS

Cindy and I lost a good friend in January. Many of you met Ellen Morgan at the Conventions over the last eight years. Ellen was in her mid eighties and like many her age the great depression was the defining era of their lives. Each generation after hers has lost part or all of these hard earned lessons, never borrow, save your money and keep it in a very safe place, to mention a few.

Having never seriously had to worry about our next meal, it would serve us well to realize that our prosperity gives us the freedom to care for the causes we champion, in our case bighorns. With little imagination we can realize the fact that if our families were struggling for the basics and the future looked to be more of the same, our outlook toward game animals would be completely different.

A strong multiple use system has been the back bone of this country's economic history. A system where mining, minerals, recreation, agriculture, watershed, timber and all other uses have a strong voice in justifying the percentage of the resources they are allocated.

When we make decisions by emotion instead of good science and monetary justification, we very well could be undermining the economy to the detriment of the cause. Our game animals are best served by a robust economy.

Along these lines the other point I feel very strongly about is the fact that these game animals, fish and birds need to pay their own way. We need to use caution in letting the minerals or agriculture industries carry the economic load for our game. If the day ever comes that the economy is so stretched that wildlife is in trouble of being economically justifiable, a history of paying its own way could be of great value in stemming the tide of over usage.

FNAWS has a well-earned history of vigorous support of all wildlife and hunter causes, balanced with a dose of common sense. Our membership in National FNAWS and its Wyoming Chapter speak for our love of wild sheep and our stand for a balanced political stance.

See you in Thermopolis for the summer fun weekend!

Jim Collins



Jack Atcheson, Jr. **Keith Atcheson**
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WHISKEY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP

LAMB SURVIVAL STUDY

Pat Hnilicka, WGFD Wildlife Biologist - Feb. 28, 2000

Efforts by a multi-agency team of wildlife professionals and critical financial support from groups like Wyoming FNAWS, have shed some light on problems with lamb survival in the Whiskey Mountain sheep herd. Since a pneumonia die-off 9 years ago, lamb survival has been poor. Since few young sheep were being added to the herd, the population had been slowly declining. The 40-year average for lamb:ewe ratio observed during winter has been around 35 lambs per 100 ewes, but since the die-off, lamb:ewe ratios have averaged about 20 lambs per 100 ewes.

Given the extended period of poor lamb production, the Whiskey Mountain Technical Committee comprised of representatives from the Wyoming Game and Fish, US Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management, began investigating why. We wanted to know whether low lamb numbers were related to low pregnancy rates, abortion, or low lamb survival, and to determine how, when, and where lambs were dying. The study area included Lake Louise, Middle Mountain, Torrey Peak, Arrow Mountain, Goat Flat, and Whiskey Mountain near Dubois, WY.

In 1998, we hired John Mionczynski to follow ewes that we had captured and had attached radio-collars and/or neckbands to. John spent many, many days and nights in the high country observing sheep behavior, health and movements. Because of his tireless efforts and keen observational skills, we discovered some very interesting things.

In 1998, we learned that nearly all ewes and lambs that spend the winter on Torrey Rim, were migrating from their high-elevation summer range on Middle Mountain down to their winter range along Torrey Creek. Why were they doing this? Why were they moving down from their summer range through very rugged and dangerous country, traversing 15 miles round trip, just to spend a day or two on their winter range? It turns out that they were eating soil at natural mineral licks in Torrey Valley. Most sheep did this at least once during the summer and some as many as 6 times. John also observed very sick lambs in late July and early August. Most were coughing, walked with stiff-legged gaits, had rough coats, and had slumped shoulders. One can only image how tough it was for these sickly lambs to make this long, arduous trip to natural mineral licks. These symptoms are very similar to a selenium deficiency in domestic sheep called white muscle disease, and so we began to wonder if there wasn't a mineral deficiency occurring. Summer forage was very low in selenium, so low that domestic sheep would develop white muscle disease within 4-6 weeks of eating it. Of course, comparing domestic sheep and wild bighorns may be like comparing the proverbial apples and oranges, however, I am not aware of any information out there that says how much of a particular mineral wild bighorns need. As a result, we had to depend on research conducted on the diets of domestic sheep.

So, it looked to us that lambs were not getting sufficient minerals, most likely selenium, in their forage or through their mother's milk. To compensate for this, sheep migrated down to natural mineral licks and to forage much higher in selenium during the summer when demand for minerals by growing lambs was highest. Lion predation was occurring as ewes and lambs traveled this route. As a result of poor health and predation, lamb survival was low. Of 15 lambs whose mothers' wore radio-collars or neckbands, 12 of them were sickly, and only 6 of the 15 survived until the end of October.

So, was there something we could do to help this situation? In 1999, we decided to place mineral blocks on the high elevation summer and fall range. These blocks were tailored to provide selenium and other trace minerals like cobalt. Our hope was that the sheep would use the blocks and stop moving down to the low country. They would be able to acquire minerals without having to traverse so far. Hopefully lamb health and survival would improve too. To our pleasure, this is exactly what happened. We saw no movements of sheep from Middle Mountain down to Torrey Valley where the natural mineral licks are located. The blocks appeared to halt movements that had been going on for at least 20 years according to some folks that live in the valley. Keeping these sheep in the high country certainly helped with lamb survival. The long treks in 1998 passed through areas that provided lions with excellent ambush sites. Keeping sheep up high kept them away from potential lion predation. We also saw healthier and larger lambs. Of 15 lambs whose mothers' wore radio-collars or neckbands, 12 of them were healthy, and all 12 survived until the end of October. We still had 3 lambs that were sick and eventually died.

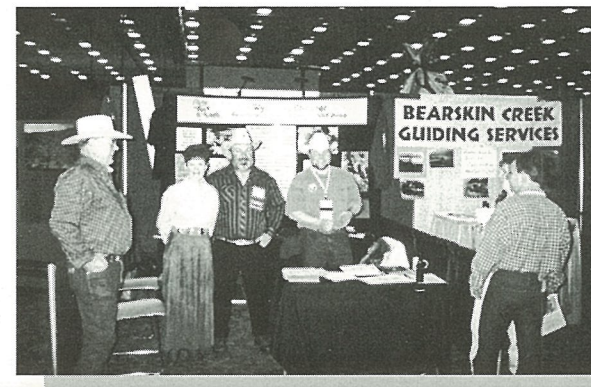
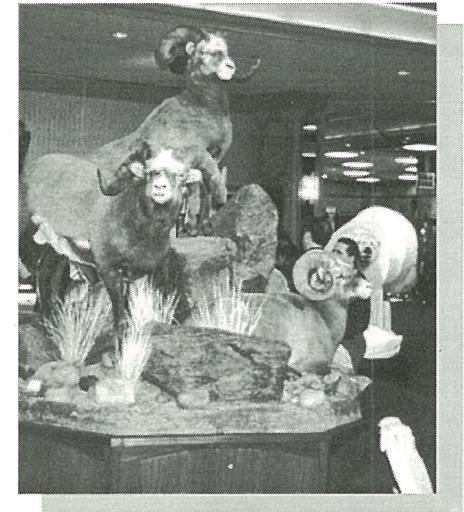
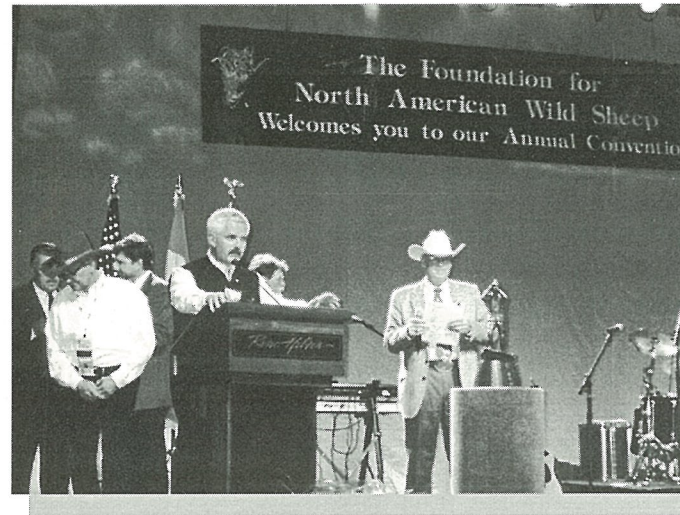
We also looked at sheep on Arrow Mountain. These ewes and lambs did not have access to mineral blocks during the summer of 1999. What we observed was rather interesting. These sheep continued to migrate during the summer to natural mineral licks in Torrey Valley, they had lambs that showed the same symptoms seen in lambs on Middle Mountain in 1998 before we put blocks out, and they had lower lamb survival. It looked to us that the blocks were having positive benefits.

So what is the plan for 2000? We'll continue to experiment with the mineral blocks in the high country and see if we observe the same pattern of healthy lambs with high survival on Middle Mountain where there will be blocks and sickly lambs with low survival on Arrow Mountain where there will not be any blocks. Hopefully, we'll see the same results!

All members of Wyoming FNAWS can take credit for results from this project. Without your interest and financial support, this project would not have been as successful. The Whiskey Mountain Technical Committee and the sheep of the Whiskey Mountain herd say thanks again! ❖

WILD SHEEP CONVENTION

FOUNDATION FOR NORTH AMERICAN



JANUARY 2000 ~ RENO, NEVADA

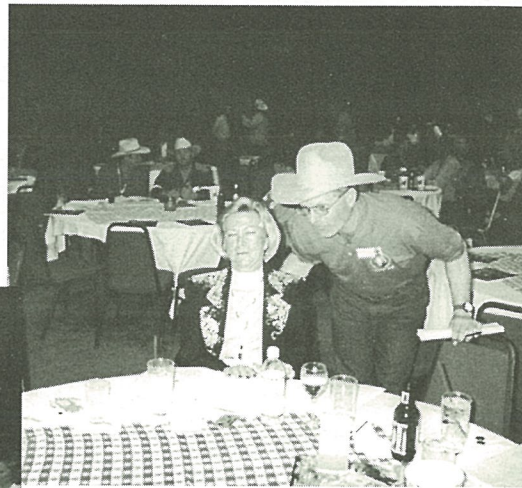
NATIONAL FNAWS - RENO 2000 - AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

As usual, bidding at the various auctions was quite spirited and I will share with you those stories which relate to *Wyoming*. The high bidder for the Governor elk permit at Friday's auction was **Dan Boone** from Texas, pictured here in the plaid shirt. **Bonnie Prochnow** of Medford, Wisconsin made the top bid for the Governor moose tag, again at Friday's auction and is shown here with outfitter B. Joe Coy from Cody, WY,

who will be guiding Bonnie on her hunt. Be sure you two hunters send me photos and stories of your hunts, and that goes for all of you reading this newsletter! Your stories are what make it interesting



Dan Boone



Bonnie Prochnow

for all of us. I missed the Saturday afternoon auction and also missed a photo op of **Kevin Small** as he bid up the second Governor elk tag and eventually was the winner. Kevin calls California home but also has a ranch here in Wyoming. Congratulations and Thanks to all of you.

This story deserves much more information that I have the background to provide, but from what I do know, **MR. DAN POCAPALIA** has been an ardent supporter of Wyoming and our bighorn sheep at the National FNAWS annual banquet and auctions since at least 1983. Once again at this year's auction for the Wyoming governor sheep tag on Saturday evening, **DAN** bid over \$40,000.00 for this permit, then returned it to the auctioneer for a second auction!! The second bidding brought almost the same amount and the successful hunter this time was **ALLEN GRAY BROWNE** from Las Vegas, shown here in photo with B. Joe Coy. These folks really deserve a big round of applause from all of us.



Allen Gray Browne



Dan Pocapalia

Summer Meeting

June 2-4, 2000

Friday, June 2, 2000	Holiday Inn of the Waters, Thermopolis	1:00 PM	Sporting Clays or Rifle/Shotgun/Trap Shooting (Gun Range)
1:00 - 5:00 PM	Board Meeting		or
Saturday, June 3, 2000	Holiday Inn of the Waters, Thermopolis	1:00 PM	Fly Fishing Clinic (Lawn of Holiday Inn) or other activity, to be determined
8:00 AM	General Membership Meeting (including funded project reports/funding requests)	5:00 PM	Wine and Cheese Party
		6:00 PM	Happy Hour
10:00 AM	General Business Meeting	7:00 PM	BBQ
12:00 Noon	Lunch (on your own)	Sunday, June 4, 2000	
		9:00 AM	Whitewater Rafting, Wind River Canyon

3rd Annual Dalmation Toadflax Weed Pull

June 17, 2000

Friday June 16, 2000

6:00 PM Reception for USFS Chief Michael Dombeck, FNAWS Headquarters, Cody

Saturday, June 17, 2000

10:30 AM Busses Leave Park County Courthouse; drive to Deer Creek Trailhead
 12:00 Noon Lunch (Bring your own!)
 12:30 PM Work Groups Pull Weeds
 3:00 PM Gather at Deer Creek Trailhead
 4:00 PM BBQ at South Fork Ranger Station
 5:00 PM Busses leave Ranger Station; return to Cody

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AREA 1 AND AREA 11 ARE THE FIFTH IN THE SERIES HIGHLIGHTING ONE NATIVE AND ONE TRANSPLANT HERD

Temple Peak (Area 11) (BHS610)

Revision Date: 2/17/00

Population Estimate: 26 (excluding WRIR) (post season 1998); population declining, and below carrying capacity; herd eliminated, then reestablished via transplants

Population Objective: 250

Most Recent Hunting Regulations: CLOSED

Current WGFD Managers: Tom Ryder, Bob Trebelcock, Chuck Clarke, Doug McWhirter, Tom Christiansen, Allan Round, Dan Stroud, Dennis Almquist

JCR Responsibility: Tom Ryder

Other Contacts: Bob Lanka, John Emmerich (WGFD)

Previous Studies: Smith (1981)
Deibert (1994)
Firchow (1995)
Ryder, T.J. and R.P. Lanka. 1997. History and Current Status of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep in the Southern Wind River Mountains, Wyoming. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cheyenne. 69pp.

Transplant History:

- 1964 Transplant - 21 sheep released in Sinks Canyon - Ryder & Lanka (1997)
- 1965 Transplant - 20 sheep released in Sinks Canyon - Ryder & Lanka (1997)
- 1966 Transplant - 18 sheep released in Sinks Canyon - Ryder & Lanka (1997)
- 1971 Transplant - 13 sheep released in Cherry Creek - Ryder & Lanka (1997)
- 1973 Transplant - 39 sheep released in Cherry Creek - Ryder & Lanka (1997)
- 1987 Transplant - 77 sheep released in Sinks Canyon & N. Fk. Popo Agie - Ryder & Lanka (1997)
- 1988 Transplant - 47 sheep released in S. Fk. Little Wind River - Firchow (1995)
- 1993 Transplant - 42 sheep released in S. Fk. Little Wind River - Firchow (1995)

Total - 277 sheep released into herd unit (including WRIR) - summarized in Hurley (1996)

Problems:

Habitat - Lack of Fire; 200 acre prescribed burn completed in Sinks Canyon in April 1999; additional burning planned for 2000; proposed timber treatment in North Fork Canyon (to open movement corridor) shelved due to limited but effective adverse public comment; diet quality poor; high reliance on bitterbrush in 2 of 3 subherds

Domestic Sheep - Past exposure to domestic sheep on winter range in North Fork Popo Agie Canyon implicated in 1992 dieoff; high likelihood of co-mingling on summer range, west of Continental Divide

Predation - mountain lion and coyote; w/ <30 sheep, predation probably significant

Genetics -

Disease - all age pneumonia dieoff in fall 1992; herd closed to sport hunting since 1994

Migration - Interrupted migration corridors due to conifer encroachment Herbivore Competition -

Recreation/Development Encroachment - Recreational activity (e.g., rock climbing, etc.) at Sinks Canyon State Park; guest houses/summer homes in North Fork Canyon

Poor/Inconsistent Classification Data - Data difficult to obtain — inconsistent; small sample size

Hunting Related - closed since 1994; no plans to reopen until population increases

Other - Lack of involvement from other agencies (BLM/USFS)



Wyoming Chapter Life Members

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| #1 Ron Ball (D) | #20 Kevin Hurley | #39 Fred Pierce | #58 Bob Kelez |
| #2 Jeff Reynolds | #21 Craig Pitters | #40 Tyler D. Benton | #59 Wayne Suda |
| #3 Dave Steger | #22 Sam Pancotto | #41 Fred L. Novotny (D) | #60 Scott Jankowski |
| #4 Don Schmalz | #23 Vincent Allegra | #42 Lee Livingston | #61 Solvay Minerals Inc. |
| #5 Harry Whyel | #24 Dirk Edgeington | #43 Richard Lennington | #62 Ron Dean |
| #6 Freddie Goetz | #25 Cindy Reynolds | #44 Lynn Stewart | #63 Ed Novotny |
| #7 Gene Hardy | #26 Fred Mau | #45 Russ Green | #64 E. Perry Edgeington |
| #8 Hale Kreycik | #27 David S. Luzmoor | #46 Truman A. Wilkin | #65 Randall K. Edgeington |
| #9 Dr. R. D. Keeler | #28 Craig Kling | #47 Tex Goerger | #66 Michael J. Thompson |
| #10 Jim Collins | #29 Sam Green | #48 Ron Wilmes | #67 Dan Coletti |
| #11 Mike Martin | #30 Cole Benton | #49 Wally Young | #68 Douglas Liller |
| #12 Jack Hildner | #31 Rodger Kendrick | #50 Joshua Robert d'Elia | #69 Ron Elkin |
| #13 Kent Stevinson | #32 Brian Valentine | #51 Ralph J. Campoli | #70 Tom Spawn |
| #14 Fritz Meyer | #33 Alfred P. Weeden | #52 John Zenz | #71 Bruce John Thompson |
| #15 Kathy Gay (H) | #34 James L. Scull Jr. | #53 Jesse Troutman | #72 Robert Sherd |
| #16 Keith West | #35 Kay Thomas | #54 Tom Sauter | #73 Larry Brannian (H) |
| #17 Lud Kroner | #36 Fred Thomas | #55 Thomas P. Grainger | #74 Dan Gay (H) |
| #18 Serge d'Elia | #37 Lou Mysterly Jr. | #56 Mike Crocker | #75 Ron Lockwood (H) |
| #19 Terry Marcum | #38 Lawrence I. Masserant | #57 Dyrk Eddie | |



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Mitch Crouser-OR
Fall '99

RUSSIAN CARIBOU (ASIAN REINDEER)
 SAME GREAT RUSSIAN OUTFITTER
 OCTOBER HUNT
\$3,995.00

ZIMBABWE

7-DAYS, 5 ANIMALS
 KUDU, ELAND, IMPALA, WARTHOG,
 DUIKER OR STEENBUCK
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"NEW" ABORIGINAL TERRITORY
 5-DAYS, 2 ANIMALS
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LIFE MEMBER WYOMING CHAPTER FNAWS

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Wildlife theme of Nature Crafts

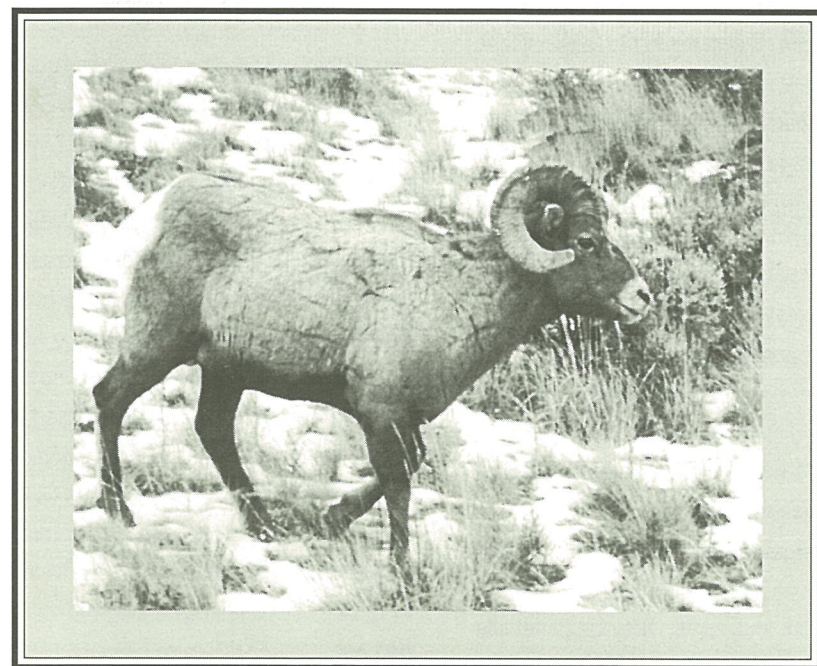


Wildlife was the theme of nature crafts projects everyone could try at the National Bighorn Sheep Center on Saturday, January 29, 2000 during Dubois Winterfest.

Children of all ages got plenty of hands-on experience learning about wild animals and their habitat by making masks, pine-cone bird feeders and refrigerator magnets.

They also colored a woodland puzzle with animals hidden in the trees, did a word search to find endangered species and guessed the track and scat of Wyoming big game animals.

All materials were supplied thanks to the support of the Wyoming Chapter of the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, and the kids took their craft projects home.



Clark's Fork (Area 1) (BHS201)

Revision Date: 2/17/00

Population Estimate: 405 (post season 1998) (downward trend, definitely below carrying capacity)
Population Objective: 500
Most Recent Hunting Regulations: 16 licenses, $\geq 3/4$ curl ram
Current WGFD Managers: Larry Roop, Mac Black
JCR Responsibility: Larry Roop
Other Contacts: Shawn Stewart (MDFWP-Red Lodge), Dave Henry (USFS), Jim Oudin (WGFD-ret.)
Previous Studies: Steve Martin (1981)
 Honess and Frost (1942)
 Buechner (1960)
 Martin & Stewart (1980)

Problems:

- Habitat** - 1988 fires — possibly lost some sheep — short term adverse impacts, but long term probably beneficial
- Domestic Sheep** - co-mingling possibilities on east end of Beartooth Plateau
- Predation** - expanding wolf population on E side of Yellowstone National Park, mountain lions; predation possibly significant with lowered bighorn sheep population size
- Genetics** -
- Disease** - scabies documented in ram harvested in 1999
- Migration** - Movement into Montana
- Herbivore Competition** - Some overlap with mountain goats - not really considered a problem
- Recreation/Development Encroachment** - Encroachment - K-Z, Crandall, Upper Clark's Fork Valley; snowmachine activity on Beartooth Plateau minor concern to wintering sheep; rebuilding of Beartooth Highway will likely have minor impacts
- Poor/Inconsistent Classification Data** - Adequate classification data difficult to obtain
- Hunting Related** - Could be "double hunting" as animals move into Montana; first B&C ram (180-6/8) harvested in Wyoming since 1994 taken in Hunt Area 1 in 1999
- Other** - late spring 1991 snowstorm caused heavy mortality in northern portion of this herd

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is advising hikers, hunters, fishers and golfers to take extra precautions and keep alert for bears while in the Bridger-Teton and Shoshone National Forests. They advise that people wear noise producing devices, such as little bells, on their clothing, to alert but not startle the bears unexpectedly.

They also advise the carrying of pepper spray in case of an encounter with a bear. It is also a good idea to watch for fresh signs of bear activity.

People should recognize the difference between black bear and grizzly droppings. Black bear droppings are smaller and contain berries and possibly squirrel fur. Grizzly bear droppings have little bells in them and smell like pepper spray.

Governor's Sheep Permit

I'M NO SHEEP HUNTER... BUT!

By Janet Nyce, Green Lane, Pennsylvania

My husband is a sheep hunter, a true sheep hunter. I am an avid hunter and outdoor woman. I am also 54 years of age, a real woman, not any twiggly. I work hard to prepare myself for the hunting trips I take, but, age, weight and time keep chipping away at the success of my efforts. I am also a grandmother of 5. Now that I have set up my excuses, let me tell you of my fabulous journey to shoot a Rocky Mountain Big Horn Sheep. My husband Jim wants to share with me his love of sheep hunting. We journeyed together to Alaska and after 9 exciting days on top of the mountain near Ptarmigan Lake both shot Dall rams. While attending the Eastern FNAWS Convention this past year he decided to buy me the Governor's permit for the Wyoming sheep tag. I was thrilled. I cried with joy. Maybe I've lost my mind!! On September 9, 99 Jim and I mounted horses at a trailhead that would take us to our base camp, along with 8 elk hunters. The Mountain Creek camp is in the Thorofare basin area outside of Yellowstone. My outfitter and long time friend, **Ron Dube, Ron Dube Outfitters**, Wapiti, WY would be my guide through this quest for my ram. It took us 8 hours of horseback riding to reach base camp. It was beautiful and frightening all at the same time. We constantly climbed higher and higher. We rode, climbed and crawled to the top. We would spend the day on the top to glass for sheep. There were elk, lambs and ewes, birds, and storms to watch. Being on top of 11,000 foot mountains each day is a thrill all in itself; getting there is another story altogether! Normally I am a happy, smiling person. By day 5 Ron finally

asked me "Janet, why are you here, you aren't having any fun, I haven't seen you smile in days." Well, it's hard to when almost everything you are doing on a sheep hunt hurts, burns, scratches or scares you to death. What can I say, I'm no sheep hunter. But I loved every minute. I think. On day 7 we were up and out as usual. Rode 2½ hours to Howell Mountain. We waited for the sun to come up and then started glassing for the ram that Ron had found late the day before. Ron left us behind and climbed up higher to glass. When he came down he told me he still hadn't seen him, but, we would climb up there anyway. We rode the horses up to about 8,500 feet and tied them off and started walking. I'm making this sound simple and easy-it wasn't. First of all, the ground I am now walking on is rather slanted-it gives you the feeling if you stop you will just slide away to nowhere. Then we start climbing up the rock face. Ron spots the ram. Now, isn't it so wonderful, my hunters heart takes over at this point. That's all you need to hear "I've spotted him, he's up there." The climbing is so much easier, even though I huff and puff like a horse, I know he is there waiting. After climbing higher and higher, I see him also. He takes my breath away, he is magnificent. The pain and frustration of the past days are gone, he's there, he's mine. We get situated, hanging downwards, toes dug in the dirt and stone. My backpack is my rifle rest, up on a ledge, I'm hanging there, waiting. Ron says the ram must stand before I shoot. He's 250 yards away, straight up, we can't make a mistake. We wait. My neck muscles are burning like



Janet Nyce

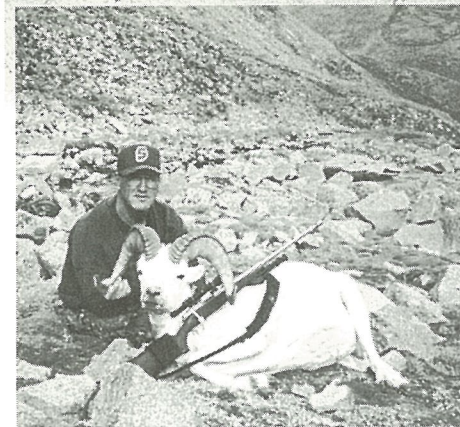
fire, my breathing is finally steady. I put my head down on my rifle stock to rest my neck. Ron says, "get ready, he's up." I place the cross hairs on his throat and pull the trigger. The mighty ram drops and falls off the cliff and rolls down closer to us. He staggers up, but we can see he is hit hard. Ron says "finish him." I shoot again and he is down. We walk over to this ram that lives in places I cannot imagine. He is so beautiful. We take a minute to enjoy his beauty. Then we celebrate. Take the pictures that remind us later that we were there. I can't believe it. I have my ram. I'm no sheep hunter, but I got my ram. Ron Dube, my guide, my friend, my husband Jim, my sheep hunter, my cheerleader. They got me there, they stayed with me through the worst and the best. That ram, he belongs to the three of us. We'll never forget it. Now, I told you I'm no sheep hunter. Will I do it again-Lord help me, yes. I go to Arizona next October (2000) for the desert ram. Then you realize don't you, I will have one more to go, the Stone's. Then I will have completed my quest for the GRAND SLAM. A story to tell my grandchildren, a story to hold tight to my heart. Who says you can't-not me!

A mixture of an opening day snow storm then warm dry conditions made for a successful hunt for **Chuck Wilkie** of Worland. His hunt was in area 5 along the Greybull River in the Absaroka Mountains, and it was self guided. "Sheep were plentiful and I saw both ewes and rams. I did a lot of scouting throughout the summer. We looked at Meadow Creek, Wood River, Steer Creek, Yellow Mountain, Marble Creek & Mountain, Venus Creek, and Piney Creek. We were on a nice ram on Marble Creek on opening morning and had a guide with another hunter ride over the top of us and spook the sheep off. On the following weekend I killed a small ram on Piney Creek. It was a good hunt all-in-all and I enjoyed the trips to the mountain". Chuck, congratulations on your ram; I wonder if the rest of us would have your positive attitude and outlook after loosing the opportunity on the first ram - I hope so!

Attorney Leonard R. Reeves, Latrobe, PA. was also a successful sheep licensee for 1999. He hunted in area 5 with outfitter Dean Johnson the first of September. Mr. Reeves declined to give any details of his hunt for our newsletter, commenting "A writer has asked to write story for national magazine".

Mario Interrante sent me his story and I am sorry to say he did not harvest a ram. He was disappointed, as any of us would be. Mario is from New Paltz, N.Y. and was on an outfitted hunt in area 6 in September.

Mark Esau



by Mark Esau, Casper, Wyoming

In December 1998 at the Wyoming FNAWS convention I purchased a Dall sheep hunt donated by Ray McNutt of **Wrangell R Ranch Outfitters**. After purchasing the hunt I contacted Ray to see if he possibly had an opening for a

MY WIFE'S SHEEP

After receiving a couple of calls from competing outfitter "friends," Fritz Meyer and Jim Collins, **Elaine Benton** decided she would let her husband, Cole Benton, a real outfitter and VP of our Wyoming chapter of FNAWS, guide her on her successful draw in area 5 for her big-horn sheep!

Son, Tyler took time off from college to accompany his mother as he knew it is virtually a once in a lifetime draw for bighorn. One of Cole's deer guides, Terry Janssen, rounded out the party. The hunt began on the 28th of August when they were all packed and riding up the Greybull River with five pack horses and mules. Approximately 5 hours later they arrived at the campsite and set up. As the 1st of September was opening day they spent time scouting and having a bit of excitement chasing one large grizzly bear out of camp. Fortunately the bear ran up above camp and disappeared, permanently.

On one scouting venture Cole spotted seven rams in the very head of a basin. As they were quite a ways off all he could tell was two of the rams were dark and appeared heavy homed. Not wanting to spook these rams he left and headed back to camp, hoping they would be there on opening day.

The hunting party hadn't been gone 45 min-

utes on opening day when they spotted the 7 rams in the same area. Now, naturally, a couple of problems enter the picture. One, they were out in the open with no cover to get closer, and second, they now spotted 5 more rams in between, with one being a decent trophy. But these also were too far away for a shot so it was decided a stalk was in order, circling the mountain to stay out of sight of all 12 rams "This put us in shale slides, but the wind was in our favor and the scenery was spectacular." Elaine said this is fine but how can I watch my footing and not look down!

Several hours later brought them to within 340 yards of the original 7 rams with all of them still laying down, and they could determine 2 of these were outstanding animals. After 2 hours of waiting, the sheep were still resting and Cole told Elaine he felt they needed to make a decision before the sheep realized something was wrong. He told her to take the one on the right as it presented the best target. Then spoken in the fashion of a true hunter Elaine asked, "Which one is the heaviest?" Naturally the ram on the left was the larger and she said, "That's the one I want!" Suddenly 3 hikers appeared on the skyline above them and, luckily, they could not see the sheep nor can the sheep see them, but Cole

we were on our way back to base camp, tired but excited. I want to thank Ray, Craig, Howard, Jason, Paul, Holly and Roger for a wonderful time. The base camp, spike camp, guides, food, horses, game quality and quantity were excellent. Ray runs a quality outfit and is a true gentleman and man of his word. This was more than just a sheep hunt, it was an experience in life that I will never forget. It would not have been possible without all those wonderful people. Thank you again. P.S. I want to thank the Wyoming chapter of FNAWS for this wonderful opportunity. I've only been a member of this organization for a year and a half but would encourage anyone interested in wild sheep or wildlife, whether a hunter, photographer, artist or just a viewer to become a member of this tremendous organization.

knows things are going to go to hell quickly and says you are going to have to shoot NOW! Elaine was shooting Tyler's .270 and with Cole's help, held in the exact spot for the long shot; then after what seemed like hours to get settled using a backpack for a rest, bingo, the ram was hers!!! Every one was ecstatic and were not sure if Elaine was laughing or crying for joy. After congratulations and photos, Tyler and Cole took over the duties of skinning and caping, then the long hike back to camp. You would think this happy hunt would end here, but no. When Cole, Tyler, and Terry returned the following morning to retrieve the meat nothing was left! Black bear or grizzly? No one stayed long enough to find out.

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left to right: Cole, Elaine & Tyler Benton



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Robbin Klein



Casper's **Robbin Klein** is short and sweet, "It was the best 10 days I can remember" but look at the photo and I think everything speaks for itself. Robin hunted in area 2 from 5 to 15 September and used outfitter **Morning Creek Outfitters**, John Porter and Robin Rick as guides. She said the weather was absolutely beautiful, the terrain steep and breathtaking, used great horses, had good food, and had so much fun wants to know when she can go again!

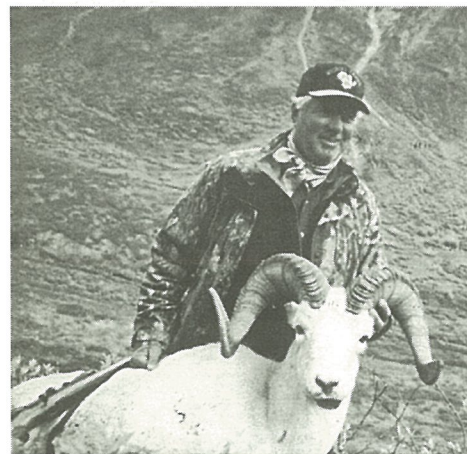
Tom Wadley



Hunter **Tom Wadley** of Riverton shot his ram, pictured above, on opening day September 1st, 1999. Tom told me a friend flew over area 5 and indicated there were rams in the general vicinity he wished to hunt. Tom and his buddies, Brad Berg and Eric Anderson hiked into area 5 two days prior to the season's opening to do some scouting and try to find a location to establish a base camp of sorts. Since the terrain was not suitable for horses, they

backpacked and hiked for 8 hours prior to reaching a basin which looked productive. To save weight they opted not to bring a tent and just used plastic tarps for ground cover to protect their sleeping bags. They estimated the elevation to be approximately 12000 feet and true to Wyoming form; it rained, got considerably colder, then snowed all night long! The first day of scouting showed approximately 17 rams in the basin in front of them. Tom continued scouting the rest of the day and the following day and all told, viewed about 70 ewes and lambs and 40 rams, many of which he felt were legal. Opening morning saw Tom and his companions back at their original location where they again spotted several rams, two of which he wanted to get a better look at. After considerable stalking, Tom found another ram with a ewe and he knew this was his trophy. Hanging off a steep rock cliff the shot was 150 yards almost straight down, but one shot did the trick and a lifetime trophy was his. Tom said the "shortcut" back to the vehicle was worse than anything they experienced on the trek in and his legs told him so! In addition to all the bighorn sheep they saw, a bull moose and 4 buck mule deer were spotted. A fantastic hunt with good friends and self-guided; made for an exceptional time.

David Boyce Connor



by David Boyce Connor, Riverton, Wyoming

Now is it OK if I tell about my hunt! Not being as fortunate as all of you I am reporting on, who did draw a bighorn tag here in Wyoming, I ventured to the Northwest Territories of Canada and had the time of my life. Had a guide in one "Doc French" who is the ultimate professional,

and wrangler Neil Cofell. We sure did some riding to scout for a nice Dall sheep, and as you can see were successful. It took about 5 or 6 days to find the rams and as we tried to plan a stalk the sheep kept moving down the mountain and eventually crossed the stream in the valley and started up towards us. Can you believe that! Well, when the 4 rams got about even with us we picked out the largest, 175 yards away, and as the saying goes, the rest is history; but it sure took a while for the adrenaline to pump back to normal. "Doc" I just had to give you that bear hug, you worked hard for me. Thanks. After a days rest and ride back to base camp we continued our hunt looking for a trophy caribou. Finding the animals was not really all that difficult as we saw between 4 and over 50 "boo" every day, including days in camp! Naturally I had to pick out the caribou at the very top of one of the steep ridges (mountain?) for my choice.

"Doc" claimed it was the steepest stalk of the entire season, including sheep, and after about 3 hours of sweat and toil we scored on a really nice bull. Grizzly bears were plentiful and one really enjoyed the sheep backstraps from my ram, which he swiped from inside panniers in the cook tent.



Jesus Yuren

Governor's Permit

If we gave a prize for distance traveled to pursue the mighty bighorn I think we would have to give it to **Jesus Yuren** of Mexico City, Mexico. Jesus was fortunate in obtaining his governor's permit for Wyoming bighorn through the Iowa Chapter of FNAWS at their annual banquet and auction. Booking agent, Jack Atchenson & Sons arranged for Jesus to fly into Cody in September where he was met by outfitter **Ron and Carol Dube of Wapati**. Jesus began his quest for a

trophy ram with a spectacular 24 mile horse back ride from trail head to base camp. Ron Dube and Jesus had seen several legal rams, some in the 170 point class during the beginning of their hunt, when finally they spotted the trophy Jesus was looking for in a group of 5 rams. As Dube tells it "my hunter settled in for the shot, eased off the safety of his rifle, and was squeezing the trigger, when, in a heartbeat, the wind shifted and off the 5 rams went, with the largest in the center of the group, preventing any opportunity for a shot." Then business in Mexico intervened and Jesus had to fly home. He returned to Wyoming to resume his bighorn hunt on 1 October. Again they saw legal rams every day but not that personal trophy Jesus was looking for. At this point Dube had to leave camp to switch out elk hunters and left his sheep hunter in the care of guide, Lonnie Fultz. On the 6th day of October Lonnie led Jesus to his trophy you see pictured here! Jesus says he had an incredible hunt, enjoyed great friendship, saw a great deal of game, including trophy bull elk, and is looking forward to his next Wyoming visit.

Hunter **Jim Armstrong** from Glenrock reported on a successful hunt in the Hurricane Mesa section of area 1. His outfitter was **Crandall Creek Outfitters** and guide Lonnie McAnulty led Jim to his ram pictured below. They had good weather varying between partly cloudy and bright sunny days with temperatures around 45-50 degrees and hunted in steep, shale rock terrain. Three rams were spotted, two of which were legal. "My guide was a very dedicated & knowledgeable outdoorsman. If you don't know sheep or the area that well, an outfitter is definitely the way to go. If you really want to have a good time, have a friend go along."



Jim Armstrong

Steve Adami



Steve Adami from Buffalo, WY, had to make an instant decision on his bighorn hunt which took place from 19 to 26 September in the Greybull River area. In his own words "We were weathered in the first day and spent the time in camp. The snow let the sheep move up higher and we spotted a large group of rams two drainages over. It took several more long hard days to finally get on the bunch of rams and the one we were looking for had left! On the way home that evening we jumped a nice ram and had to make a quick decision. We decided to take him." Steve hunted with **Bob Sundeen** and they had decent weather. The terrain hunted was really steep and above timberline. In addition to the sheep spotted they also saw elk and deer. I had a good camp, good livestock, good company, and a good hunt says Steve.

Jeff Keim



I believe Jeff wrote his story in both **Grand Slam** and **Wild Sheep** and it does not take a second glance to see **Jeff Keim** of Illinois, pictured above, is one happy hunter. With the guidance of Outfitter **Tim Hockhalter** of Cody they scored in area 1 on the best sheep taken in Wyoming in 1999. As far as I know it did make the Boone & Crockett record book and is the first in several years from Wyoming to make the book. Photo was taken in Reno at the FNAWS convention and you can see the hunter, outfitter, and sheep all received awards! Well deserved. I spent a little time at the watering hole with these guys while in Reno and I can only speculate at the good time they must have had while hunting-wish I could have been there.

BEAU FALER'S BIGHORN RAM CONTINUES FAMILY TRADITION

By Jennifer Binning, Pinedale, Wyoming

The last weekend in September of this year is one that **Beau Faler** will tell her grandchildren about. This is the year Beau made her addition to a long line of enormous Faler bighorn rams.

Accompanied by her parents and some long-time family friends, Beau was guided by **Terry Reach** on the week-long bighorn hunt, high in the Wind River Mountains.

This was the first time Beau had drawn a bighorn permit, and she was ready for the hunt. "I have wanted to shoot a bighorn ever since I saw my dad's," she says with a grin. Beau grew up in a household listening to her older brother and sisters rave about the high country and the thrill and challenge of the hunt. She knew it was only a matter of time before she got to go as well.

After a few days establishing a base camp, Beau, her father Jud, Terry, and two others climbed up into the rocks well above tree line and scouted the area for three days. They had seen several rams during this time, but they were too far away to even consider trying to track. The group then returned to basecamp and made day trips into the rocks from then on.

On the seventh day of the trip, Terry finally saw a group of rams on the back side of Square Top Mountain, and he loped back two miles to find Beau and bring her to a spot above the sheep for a good shot. "My heart was going a million miles an hour, but Terry really did a great job building up my confidence," she said.

Positioned at about a 40-degree angle above the ram, Beau positioned her father's .270 Weatherby and squeezed off a shot. The ram collapsed in a heap, shot through the lungs at well over 300 yards.

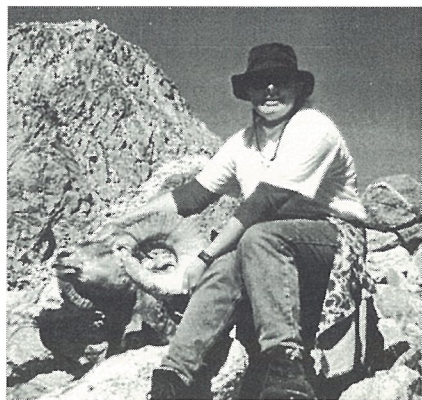
According to local taxidermist Ralph Faler, the ram scored a respectable 160 points, which would not quite place it in the record books, but

comes mighty close.

Beau's father, Jud, the holder of a Grand Slam of mountain sheep himself, estimated the ram's age at around 12 years old. Beau noted he only had about four teeth left in his head. Beau wondered whether the old man would have made it through another winter, even though he had lots of good quality meat on him, which the Falers boned out and packed out of the mountains on their backs.

Beau said she felt like she was carrying on a family tradition when she returned from her successful hunt. Her father has many ram mounts that are displayed in Faler's General Store, but not even Jud can hold a candle to Beau's great-great uncle Ernie Faler.

Ernie was a 75-year old Wyoming native when he was featured in *Wyoming Wildlife* in 1969. For Beau, bringing home a beautiful trophy ram was a treat but the best part of the entire trip was getting to know her parents better. "Spending eight days on a mountain with someone, you learn a lot about them," she said. The weather was less than ideal, with the base camp party spending several cold, wet days in a snowstorm, but "mom was a real trooper." When Beau's sheep was finally brought down to the base camp, Jud looked down at his youngest daughter and said, "I am damn proud of you." Beau smiles at the memory, and says, "Words just can't explain how that makes you feel ... We had a lot of fun."



Beau Faler

1999 WYOMING BIGHORN SHEEP HUNT

by Dale Kierstead, Marion, Indiana

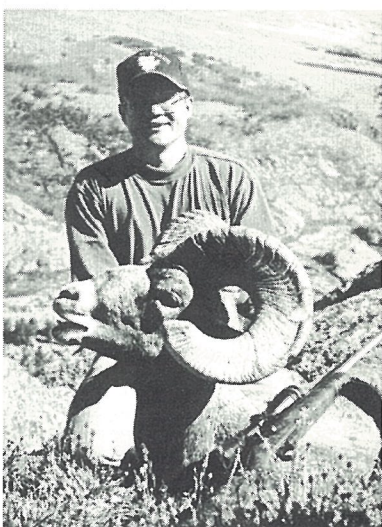
I woke up relatively early and stepped outside to take a look around as the sun began to appear above the mountain skyline a few miles from our little cabin on the outskirts of town. In the dark shadows you could see several rabbits scattering for cover. The thought of a hot fresh cup of coffee, the cool refreshing morning air filling my lungs, and the anticipation of climbing the mountain after "the monarch" filled me with exciting energy.

Since the early ninetys I'd been applying for bighorn sheep permits in most of the states that allowed sheep hunting. I have never considered myself particularly lucky but I'm starting to believe my good friend, gunsmith, and writer, Bob Jourdan. He repeatedly says I've been "dog-gone" lucky when it comes to being drawn. Bob started me off on this rocky road to big game hunting shortly after we met in the late eightys. He had applied for many, many years in Colorado and Wyoming and finally drew a tag and bagged a nice ram in 1994. A year later, that would be the first year I was eligible to be drawn in Colorado, I drew a sheep tag in Gunnison National Forest. Now, just a few years later I'd drawn a second sheep tag in unit ten - Whiskey Basin outside Dubois, Wyoming.

It's very interesting how human nature works. For anyone who has applied for big game permits with ridiculously terrible odds it starts out something like this. "If I could only get drawn for that permit I'd be happy. Just the opportunity to hunt such a magnificent animal would be an honor." Well as soon as you get a permit in hand

all of that thinking is out of the window and you're confronted with a new set of concerns. "Am I going to find an honest guide? What if I find a guide, pay him, and he skips out on his commitment days before the hunt is scheduled to start? What if the guide turns out to be fine but the weather deteriorates and we can't get up the mountain? What if... What if..."

Back in the early summer I started addressing the question of who to hire as an outfitter. I'd narrowed the choice to three outfitters. One was a gung-ho go-getter who called me the day the Wyoming Department of Game and Fish released the draw results. I was impressed with his eagerness. The second guide was a high priced local outfitter who had been around for years and had an impressive list of clients. Among those was a state senator who had recently taken a real nice ram. The third outfitter was Fritz Meyer (Fritz and Connie Meyer - **Wind River Outfitters**). He lived, hunted,



Dale Kierstead

DREAM WEEKEND from page 14

my binoculars, I could see why. The ridge was centered in a large bowl and you could look a couple miles or more in every direction.

The steep rocky slides reached to the sky and down to the timbered valleys below. Everybody picked a direction and started looking. I looked off to the west and noticed some snow that made it through the hot summer days. I raised my binoculars and looked to the right of the drift and picked out a sheep's butt. "There's a sheep John," I said. John got his spotting scope out and set up to check him out. Brett did the same. It turned out to be not one sheep, but three, and all three were rams. John started to study them and told me one was a little one, one was an average ram, and the third was a pretty nice ram. We were looking 1½ miles and John judged him to be at least a 165 ram. Brett thought maybe a little more. I am not a very good field judge of sheep but I really liked the looks of him. He was a dark ram and his horns looked heavy and symmetrical. After studying the terrain we decided to make a run at him. We rode the horses down off the ridge, through the timber, and over to the base of the rocky slide. The horses would rest while we climbed the last ¾ mile on foot. We were in sheep country now, the hill was steep, the air was thin, and the wind was raging. As we stopped to catch our breath every 75 yds or so, I questioned John about the affects of the wind on bullets. John is one of the better marksman in Cody, and has shot in many different situations and weather conditions. We guessed the wind to be blowing at least 40 mph, and he figured the bullet would drift about 10 inches in 300 yds. "If we get in a hurry, listen to what I say, and I will tell you where to hold," he instructed. I listened carefully, I didn't want to screw this up. I have heard too many stories from friends about their bad luck sheep hunting. One hunter I knew worked hard to find a ram, found a good one, worked up to 100 yds only to miss the shot. Other hunters have made their stalks and

accidentally shot the smaller ram instead of the big one they wanted. We were closing the gap and we were running out of cover. Then we spotted one of the rams at the top of a finger of trees, about 350 yards away. We worked our way closer for a better shot, only to spook the smallest ram that we didn't know was so far below the two bigger rams. He immediately charged up the hill to inform his superiors about the intruders.

The bigger rams spooked, but didn't know why. As they ran up the hill, we took off after them. Then the rams stopped, we saw a dead tree, and I laid the rifle across it for a rest. "He's the one on the left," John said, as I got them in my scope. I tried to get the cross-hairs on him, but a large evergreen branch swaying in the wind blocked my shot. Seconds later, the rams were on the run again. "Don't worry, they can't get out of here without us getting a shot," John said, as we took off again. We ran another 50 yards up the hill and got a break as the rams stopped one last time. This time there were no trees in the way, but if they took off again I probably could not get a shot before they went over the top. I found a rest as I gasped for air. "He's the one on the right, the darkest one, hold at the base of his neck," John said. I've never been great at taking much time to get a shot off, so I quickly put the cross-hairs at the base of his neck, and squeezed the trigger.

The 300 sounded off and hit its mark. The ram went down like he was shot in the head. He tumbled down the slide about 50 yards, and came to rest behind a rock. I couldn't believe I got him. The right ram with a good one shot kill. We would find out after we reached him, the 180 grain bullet had drifted about 12 inches and smacked the ram behind the front shoulders. Between Brett's secret spot, and having John beside me telling me where to hold, and which ram to shoot was the key to my success. It's tough to keep track of everything when you are in a hurry and trying to kill a trophy of a lifetime before he gets away.

HALF A GRAND SLAM IN TWO YEARS by Bob Jacot, Mesa, Arizona

Not as easy as it sounds after applying for twenty plus years to draw a desert big horn permit in my home state of Arizona, I decided to try elsewhere (Wyoming). The first year Wyoming started the point system, I applied for a rocky mountain sheep permit. Of course, I didn't draw a tag the first year. I kept trying in Wyoming, as I kept trying in Arizona. In 1997 I drew an Arizona desert big horn sheep permit. That was my twenty-seventh year of applying.

I was determined not to use an outfitter in my home state. My son, Bob Jacot, my good friend, Thatcher Gibson, and myself scouted my sheep area on several occasions, starting in September and ending the last weekend of November. Note: The hunt opened December first. On the fourth day of the hunt, I harvested a nice ram. What a thrill.

In 1999 I drew a rocky mountain sheep permit in Wyoming. I think I was very fortunate. The point system was the reason I drew a tag, so the system works. On this sheep hunt, I hunted with Fritz Meyer, owner and operator of **Wind River Mountain Outfitters** in Dubois, Wyoming. Fritz runs an excellent outfit, first class, good guides, good camp, good food and last but not least, good horses. I was able to harvest a nice ram, considering the fact, the unit I hunted in is not known for producing large rams. A special thanks to super guide, Dirk Edgeington and his assistant Cody Brown. They made a dream hunt of a lifetime come true for me. This hunting trip was extra special for me because my son was able to go along. We had a wonderful time thanks to Wind River Mountain Outfitters.

Wild sheep, the most magnificent and majestic animals on earth. I love 'em.

After taking pictures, shaking hands, and caping out my ram, we loaded up our back packs and started down the hill to the horses. Having three of us made the job a lot easier.

That clear, cold, mountain water never tasted so good when we got back to the horses. We made it back to camp about 10:30 that night. I was beat, but I couldn't sleep as the day's events kept replaying in my mind. My ram was everything I wanted and more. There was only 1/8" difference from one side to the other, and would green score near 170.

The next morning, we awoke to the sound of snow hitting the tent, so we stayed in those warm sleeping bags longer than usual. We got up about 10:00, cooked some breakfast, and admired my sheep some more. About 1:30 it cleared up, so we decided to go to look for another ram for Brett. As we were saddling up, one of the horses looked across the meadow and whinnied.

Brett walked over to see what the horses had seen and turned around to say, "Get your gun, there's a bear!" John and I snatched the 300 and ran out in the meadow. The bear ran into the trees on a side hill. There was an opening, up from where the bear entered. "Sit here and watch that opening," John said. John & Brett went down below the bear and walked through the trees. I saw the bear come into the opening and leveled the 300 on his neck. Ten minutes later we were taking pictures, and skinning a bear. He was 11½ yrs. old, 6' long, and his skull measured 19½ inches dry. This weekend was like a dream. I'll never forget it. John & Brett were great to go to the hills with. It's nice to be there with people who are easy to get along with. John loves to be in the mountains, loves to hunt, and loves to see somebody get their trophy. All that together with his knowledge of shooting and ballistics, you've got a guide that cannot be equaled. If you want to hunt with someone that will give you 110%, and love every minute of it, call John Porter of Morning Creek Outfitters at 1-307-587-5343.



Bob Jacot



Gary Martin

Edgeington. Dirk and I hit it off from the start. I was going to hunt my ram with the bow and arrow. Fritz told me my odds were low and that no one has ever killed a ram in Area 4 with a bow. I wanted to be the first.

I decided to hunt ten days beginning on August 18 through August 28 before the gun season opened. The first six days of the hunt were slow.

We made one stalk on two rams and spotted about 50 lambs and ewes. We decided to move camp. Things picked up considerably. I made a stalk on four rams on the eighth day of my hunt. Everything went great on the stalk and I got right up to where they were bedded. I walked up over the edge at full draw ready to shoot. The rams leaped up as I appeared over the edge and ran past me at 25 yards. I picked out a good one and shot – and missed. The rams ran a ways and stopped. I took another shot but missed a second time. My heart sank. I was so close at getting my third ram with the bow.

SUCCESS AT LAST

by Gary Martin

I finally drew my Wyoming sheep tag in Area #4. Now I had to decide on an outfitter. I made lots of calls to many good outfitters. I ended up with one of the best: Fritz Meyers of **Wind River Mountain Outfitters**. Fritz runs a great hunt with excellent guides. I was lucky enough to get Dirk

MY DREAM WEEKEND

by Greg Poley, Cody, Wyoming

After 22 years of applying for a sheep tag, I finally drew in 1999. One of the first calls I made was to my friend, John Porter. John has taken many rams over the last several years.

He assured me I would get my ram and he would help me. "Don't get in a hurry and shoot a small one," he said. "You've got two months, so wait for one you'll be happy with." John was booked the first three weeks of the season, so I decided to try to get my ram on my own with the help of my brother and other friends. We spent the summer looking at country I have never been in before. Every weekend we would ride the horses somewhere and I would find myself asking my brother, "Why haven't we ever come up here before?" We saw a lot of awesome real estate in three months. About two weeks before the season, we spotted six rams on top of a mountain. One of the rams looked very respectable. We watched them for about half an hour as they worked their way up and over the top. The big ram stopped on a pinnacle and looked down over the valley, and then moved on. The next ram stopped on the same point and then they all had to have their turn as if playing follow the leader. I decided this would be the ram I would try for.

The next two weeks went by fast. We gathered our things, made plans, and on Aug 30th, two days before the season opened, our friends, Val and Cindy, packed us in. That night we glassed the mountain for my ram, but nothing was moving. The next morning we saddled the horses and rode up to the spot we had seen the rams before. We spent the whole day glassing and looking with

no luck. Our plan was simple, we would find the rams and watch them till dark. We would come back the next morning, the first day of the season, and collect my trophy. We would be back to camp by lunch, and home that night. It played out like a sad country song, **wrong!** The next day was Sept. 1. Now I could carry my gun and if we saw him today, I could hunt him instead of watching him through a spotting scope. The first day was a repeat of the day before except for the extended power hike, still no ram. The next three days the mountains disappeared as the clouds moved in and the rain came down. The last day we hunted this drainage we saw ewes and lambs but my ram would not show himself so much for killing my ram the first week, let alone the first day. Now it was time to go back to that nasty thing-work.

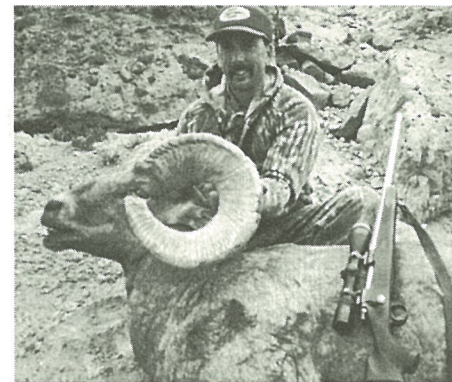
The next two weekends were spent with friends trying to help me get my ram. We spotted some but had no success. Then I received a call from a friend, Chris Nielson, who also had a tag. He had killed his ram and invited us over to see it. Thursday night we drove out to his house to check it out. I was surprised to see John Porter there with one of his sheep hunters. He had taken his hunter in the day before to start his sheep hunt and shot a heavily broomed 170 ram the first day out. Chris's ram, also scoring over 170, was along side John's hunter's ram. I informed John and Chris that either one would be just fine for me. John then asked, "So are you ready to go tomorrow?" I only had to think about that for a half second and the words "Damn Right" popped out of my mouth. Another friend, who also had a tag, Brett Richmond decided to go with us and show us one of his favorite spots. The next day (Friday), we gathered our things and took off

I finished the hunt with two more unsuccessful stalks. Fritz wanted me to come back. Naturally, things were hectic at work so I told him I would let him know a few days after I got home to see how things were going. I knew I had to go back especially with the new raffle that FNAWS has for a Desert tag.

I called Fritz back and scheduled a return trip for September 22 through September 29. I arrived the evening of September 21 and Dirk Edgeington was to be my guide once again; I was ecstatic. I decided to bring my rifle this time.

On the way into camp the very next day, Dirk spotted six rams. Three of them were good rams. We made a stalk on them and as you can see by the photo, I now have three of the four rams for my grand slam. I'll be at the FNAWS to see if my luck continues and I get a chance at the Desert Bighorn.

Thanks again to Fritz and Dirk for a great hunt and to the many new friends I made in Dubois, Wyoming.



Greg Poley

again. We left the trail head about 6:00pm and rode to our base camp about 14 miles in 2½ hours. John's horses were some of the best I have been around. They are all fox trotters and walkers. My horse for the weekend was a 7 year old fox trotter named Colonel who was as sure footed as he was smooth. After setting up camp and eating some of Lori's (John's wife) fine cooking, we crawled in our sleeping bags. The morning came fast and we awoke to cloudy skies and gusty winds. After a hearty breakfast, we saddled the horses, and started our climb up the mountain. It seemed like the animals were out moving. We saw a couple of moose soon after we left. A couple of miles past camp, the elk sign was thick, and we rode up on a branch bull in the timber. One more week, season would be open, and someone would be chasing him around the mountain. We stopped a few times and glassed for sheep as we worked our way up the mountain. We watched two spike bulls feeding across a hill. A half hour and a half mile later John spotted two nice mule deer bucks a few hundred yards away. Finally, about 12:30, we reached Brett's ridge he likes to glass from. As I sat down and reached for

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and guided in and around Dubois for many years. I liked the way Fritz talked. He knows the mountains, was realistic in his expectations, and called it the way he saw it. When we discussed expectations of the hunt he promised no world records but indicated a good possibility of harvesting a nice mature ram around 160-170 (Boone and Crocket). Now the problem was selecting between the three of them. All of them had positive attributes.

My decision came together in two unusual ways. One night before deciding whom to use I received a call from an individual who had hunted unit ten (Whiskey Basin) in Wyoming the year I hunted Gunnison National Forest in Colorado for bighorn sheep. Coincidentally, he had drawn a permit for Gunnison National Forest and was inquiring about the guide I used back in 1995. I immediately asked him who he'd used as a guide when he hunted Whiskey Basin. He happened to have used Fritz Meyer and simply said "Fritz runs a good outfit... He's first class." Shortly before or afterward, I cannot recall, I'd called my friend and taxidermist, Ralph Thomason, who frequently hunts around the Dubois area and asked him if he knew of any good outfitter. He said he'd met a guy by the name of Fritz and felt that he had a good reputation. Enough said. I booked my hunt.

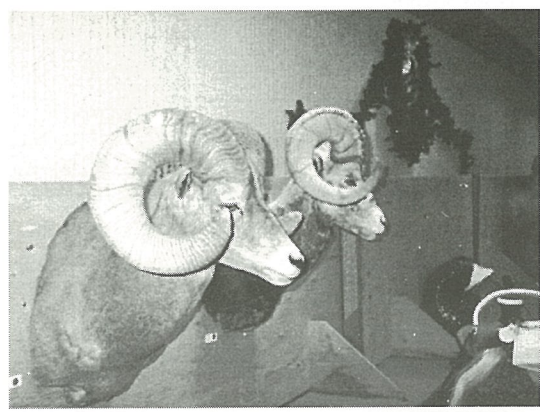
No sooner was the decision made and those nagging human nature questions started in again. Had I made the right decision? Should I have picked the real go-getter? Was the outfitter with the impressive client list really better or did he just charge a premium? Was Fritz really as good as his references? Would Fritz hook me up with a jake-leg guide who did not know the difference between sheep and deer turd? Coincidentally, I had a guide like that a while back in Texas. To boot, he got us lost on the main track road coming in from an evening hunt. Lord forbid.

A day earlier I found myself driving up to Fritz and Connie's house. The door was open and the coffee was on. Bashfully we entered. My wife Melanie, my son Robert, and my daughter Alexis had also made the trip. They were headed to Yellowstone while I hunted Middle Mountain. We concluded our business and adjourned to the back room. The room contained a hot tub, a bar, and lots of sheep pictures. We must have looked at and talked sheep for an hour or two. Dirk popped in and Fritz introduced him as my guide. I did not know exactly how to size him up. But I would soon find out since we were headed up the mountain the next morning.

I arrived early the next morning while Fritz and Dirk were working on replacing a lost horseshoe. Nate arrived. Nate, a local teenager, student, and outdoor enthusiast had asked to come along for the ride and volunteered to help out. That was just fine with me. An extra set of eyes is almost always beneficial and you never know when you might need a little extra help. We were expecting to stay out as long as it took to get a sheep. I'd booked a seven day hunt but reserved any additional days required to take a ram. We loaded six horses and were off to the trailhead.

We headed up the trail through the trees, over lush green valleys, up dusty switchbacks, up the mountain. Not more than a couple of miles in and about half-way up we came upon two groups of hunters who had rented a group of llamas to pack them up the mountain. That's a sight to see. One of the llamas had refused to climb any further and its owner was trying to talk sense into the beast. We visited a while and decided that since we couldn't speak llamanese we would not be of much help, and so we moved on.

Steve Harlan reported on his hunt in area 7, NE of Jackson with outfitter **Tom Toolson**. He said the weather was perfect, frosty mornings and light jacket days during 7 to 13 September. "I found that sheep hunting is truly about hunting the sheep. Although I was fortunate enough to take a nice ram, the real joy of my hunt was the hunting of the animal in this beautiful country with fine people like Tom. I've never hunted with anyone who cared more about the success of my hunt than my outfitter." Steve said they saw numerous elk, 60-70 ewes and lambs, and 3 outstanding rams in really spectacular, mountainous country.



WYOMING CHAPTER *foundation for* NORTH AMERICAN WILD SHEEP BANQUET ~ 1999 ~ CASPER

