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The **RAM**PAGE



**Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation
Spring 2026**

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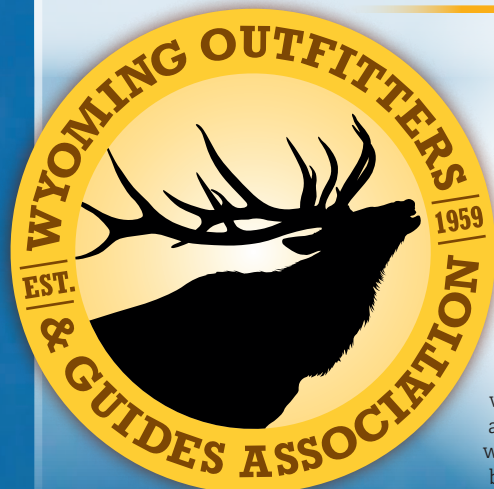


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Photo: Mark Gocke

2026-2027 CALENDAR

May 14-16, 2026
 WSF Chapter & Affiliates Meeting
 Grand Junction, Colorado

June 5-6, 2026
 WY WSF Annual Convention
 Casper, Wyoming

June 24-25, 2026
 Wyoming Bighorn Sheep Summit
 Burgess Junction, Wyoming

December 4-5, 2026
 WY WSF Board & Membership Winter Meeting
 Newcastle, Wyoming

February 3-6, 2027
 50TH Annual WSF Sheep Show
 Reno, Nevada

2025-26 Governor's License Sales Totals

2025 Sale Location	2026 LICENSE SALES	2025 LICENSE SALES
WSF	\$250,000	\$215,000
Eastern	\$234,000	\$221,000
Midwest	(Late March Banquet)	\$130,000
Iowa	(Late March Banquet)	\$150,000
Wyoming	(Early June Banquet)	\$300,000
Total	\$484,000	\$1,016,000

Wyoming WSF would like to thank and recognize Life Members who have signed up since the Fall 2025 RamPage was published. A complete listing of WY-WSF Life Members is available for viewing on the WY-WSF web page, under the "Life Members" tab. If you are interested in signing up, or upgrading to Life Member or Ramshorn Society Life Membership status with WY-WSF, please visit our store or membership pages on the website.

New Life Members

- 743 Aiden Roskowiak
- 744 J.B. Cholnoky
- 745 Jay Johnson
- 746 Christopher Seely
- 747 Cody Porter
- 748 Kendra Young
- 749 Blake Chamley
- 750 Jim Zumbo
- 751 Patrick Ginder

We thank all of our past, current, and future Life and Ramshorn Society Life Members!

The **RAM**PAGE

Features

Spring 2026 Board of Directors:

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Magazine Editor - Kendra Young

Advertisement Information

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The RamPage is a biannual publication, with submission deadlines in February and September each year.

Mailing Information

Address Changes: Submit address changes to Info@wyomingwildsheep.org or (307) 213-0998.

Each membership address will receive one mailed copy of the RamPage. If you would like to receive more copies contact RamPage@wyomingwildsheep.org

**Front Cover Photograph: Justin Binfet
"Magpie Secret"**

Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation



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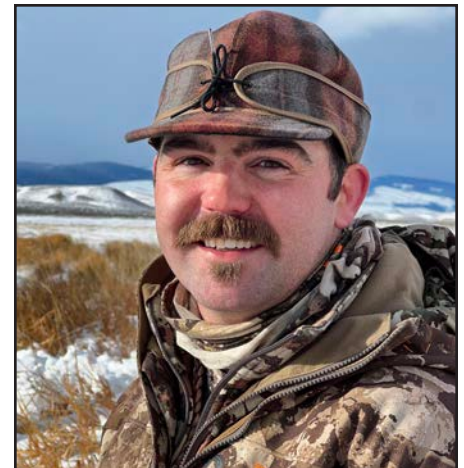
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The Power of Small Wins

By Katie Cheesbrough, Executive Director

Conservation is often imagined as a series of big moments. Helicopters lifting bighorn sheep into the mountains. A trailer door opening and bighorn sheep bounding out to reoccupy historic habitat. Observing wildlife utilizing a finished habitat project. Those moments matter. They are the visible milestones that remind us why we do this work.

But the truth is, bighorn sheep conservation is built on small wins.

It happens in long meetings where biologists, land managers, and conservation groups work through complex decisions. It takes shape in grant applications, comment letters, and careful negotiations that never make headlines. It shows up in the tireless and often uncelebrated work of battling cheatgrass, or in a dataset that finally answers a question we have been carrying for years.

These moments may not be flashy, but they are the foundation of every success story.

Consider the Sweetwater Rocks bighorn sheep reintroduction. What the public will eventually see is a powerful and exciting moment as sheep are released into their historic native range. What most people will not see are the years of planning, habitat improvements, landowner outreach, disease risk analysis, and coordination with agency partners that made that moment possible. Every step forward along the way is a small win, and without them, there is no reintroduction.

The same is true in our work to address invasive annual grasses. There is no single project or treatment that solves the problem. Progress comes in restored acres, one project at a time. It comes from partnerships with agencies, landowners, and volunteers who are committed to improving range health over the long term. Each treated area may seem modest on its own, but together they create healthier winter ranges, better forage, and more resilient bighorn sheep habitat.

In the policy arena, small wins matter just as much. This past year, we have been deeply engaged in major energy and development proposals in bighorn sheep habitat, including the Seminoe Pumped Storage project and the Grand Targhee expansion. These are complex and high-stakes issues with real consequences for wild sheep. Progress rarely looks like a single decisive outcome. More often, it looks like better data, improved mitigation measures, protection of key movement routes, and ensuring that bighorn sheep remain part of the conversation at every stage.

Habitat improvement work follows the same pattern. A water development completed. A fence modified. A weed treatment applied. A migration

corridor protected. No single project changes the landscape on its own, but together they create places where bighorn sheep can survive and thrive.

Disease research and mitigation also move forward through steady, incremental progress. Better surveillance, improved tools, new partnerships, and management strategies that reduce risk herd by herd all add up over time.

These small wins happen because you all care. Volunteers, donors, landowners, hunters, agency partners, and Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation members all play a role. Every thriving bighorn herd is the result of countless quiet victories built over years.

As we move into another season of challenges and opportunities, it is worth remembering that conservation success rarely arrives all at once. More often, it comes one acre, one decision, and one small win at a time.



Katie

A Ram Hunt at Three Yards Per Minute

By: Scott Hemingway

To begin, I have to say that I feel blessed to have even been given the opportunity. Drawing a sheep tag was something I assumed would never happen. Recruiting help was the first thing that mattered to me. Fortunately, I was able to recruit my son in law, brother in law and a family friend, and a long time friend of ours from Smoot. They made this entire hunt possible for me, and I wanted to give credit where credit is due. My hunt area was two and my crew advised starting in Sunlight Basin. We scouted for two days before the season started. What a majestic area to spend time in. Having a spotting crew spread out made a world of difference. We saw groups of ewes, mountain goats, grizzlies, and black bears, but no rams hiking in some of the most unforgiving terrain I've spent time in.

Opening morning, we decided to go into Sulfur Creek and spread out. Several of us went to the head of the canyon, and up through the scree fields to spread out and glass. Two others stayed about halfway up the canyon and glassed off the road. About midmorning, we received word from the road spotters that they had spotted three rams and one was a decent ram. Anyway, back down we went. When we got to the road, we ran into another sheep hunter. This guy claimed he had shot thirteen rams in his life and wasn't interested in the rams our spotters had seen. It amazed me that anybody had hunted sheep that many times. I assume the gentleman had more

money than all of our ragtag crew combined. At any rate, he asked me if I was going to shoot one of those rams and I said I would if I got the chance. He kind of mocked me and said, "Well they're only 400 yards off the road." Ha! Fat chance.

By the time we got down to our spotters, the sheep were mere dots on the rim of the canyon. But undaunted, the three of us set off to hike up and try to get a shot. Meanwhile, the wiser of our brethren, the spotters, stayed right where they were. When I say we hiked up to go after them, what I really mean is stumbled, bumbled, and crawled up the scree field that at some point seemed near vertical. I distinctly remember my son-in-law stating that he decided he didn't really want to sheep hunt himself after all. Finally, we got in range and I took the shot at 411 yards. The ram stumbled, ran right, and

we saw lots of dust rising. The spotters said they had seen it go down and only two ran off.

It took two hours to gain those 411 yards. I did the math, it's three yards per minute. Which, thinking back, isn't bad for crawling like a toddler. It turned out the ram had in fact not "gone down." It actually did exactly what many heart shot animals do. It ran like h*ll for another 150 yards before falling down and dying in a steep sided ravine.

I'll simply finish up by saying that I will always look back fondly on that hunt and the opportunity to share it with a great group of guys.

P.S. - my jeans only had a few holes in the butt from the areas I decided it would be safer to slide down on my butt rather than try to walk on the way back down.



Austin Coppock and Scott Hemingway

President's Message

By: Bralli Clifford

As we move well into 2026, our passion for wild sheep has never been stronger. In an often hectic and ever-changing world, it's important to slow down and reflect on what truly matters. For the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, that purpose remains clear: to conserve and enhance bighorn sheep populations, safeguard against their decline, and support professional management programs that ensure these herds thrive for generations to come.

None of this work happens in isolation. Our past, present, and future donors, members, volunteers, and participants are the driving force behind every success we celebrate. Your commitment allows us to continue fulfilling our mission to put—and keep—kids and wild sheep on the mountain.

On behalf of the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation Board of Directors, I extend our sincere gratitude to each of you. Your belief in this organization and its vision fuels everything we do, from habitat projects on the ground to long-term conservation planning across the state. There are many ways our supporters help sustain this mission.

Donations—whether one-time or recurring—provide critical funding for projects such as Steve's Habitat Project, the Conservation Fund, Memorial Donations, SRI, and the WY-WSF General Fund. These gifts directly translate into measurable conservation outcomes. (<https://www.wyomingwildsheep.org/product/donations/>)

We are also proud to introduce and grow our Endowment Fund, which offers supporters an opportunity to invest in the future of wild sheep conservation. From modest contributions to legacy gifts, this fund allows for thoughtful planning through estate giving, appreciated securities, donor-advised funds, real estate options, and more—ensuring long-term stability for our mission.

Participation in our raffles continues to be another exciting and impactful way to support Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation. Each year brings new opportunities, including chances to win unique hunting experiences, travel opportunities, custom gear, and more—all while directly contributing to conservation efforts. (<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/wyoming-wild-sheep-affles>)

Our biannual events, held the first weekends of June and December, remain cornerstones of our chapter. Attendance, ticket purchases, games, raffles, and bidding on our outstanding live and silent auction items all help turn passion into action by putting dollars directly on the ground. Register now for our 42nd Annual Convention and Expo June 6th & 7th in Casper. (<https://casper26.givesmart.com/>)

Membership continues to be one of the most meaningful ways to engage with our organization. Whether joining

for the first time, upgrading, or gifting a membership to a friend or family member, members stay closely connected through our RamPage, emails, social media, and outreach efforts—strengthening our community and expanding our impact. (<https://www.wyomingwildsheep.org/join/>)

No matter how you choose to support Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, please know that every contribution matters. Every dollar donated, every hour volunteered, every project supported, and every message shared helps move our mission forward.

Thank you for your continued dedication, friendship, and belief in the future of wild sheep conservation. Together, we will continue to put and keep wild sheep and kids on the mountain.



Bralli



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The Perfect Mix

By: Cody Porter

When I got the news that I had drawn a bighorn sheep ewe tag, I yelled in excitement and immediately started planning for the hunt. I told my dad that I want this hunt to be a real sheep hunt with hiking, glassing, and working hard for it.

After numerous scouting trips, September 15th was here at last! The morning of the hunt, the temperature started off cool and quickly rose. We found the group of sheep at the top of the Ferris Mountains and knew we had our work cut out for the day. We started our several-hour ascent up the mountain. We had nearly crested over the top, when we saw the herd of sheep lying on the steep rocky hillside. We crawled to an outcropping and could see them already starting to spook. We looked to our left and there was a ewe, or female sheep, standing 50 yards away looking directly at us. As my dad confirmed it was a ewe, I got set up and ready to take the shot. At first, she was standing directly behind a tree, leaving me no shot, but in a split second, she turned broadside. That's when I fired. The sheep dropped in her tracks. My dad and I grabbed all our gear and went to the sheep in pure shock and amazement knowing she was down. As I got to the ewe, I picked up her head and I realized she had a collar and tags in both ears. I stood there stunned, realizing that this hunt had turned out even better than my expectations. Not only was my ewe an older sheep, but she was also one that had been transplanted and tracked. My excitement grew knowing that I would be

able to learn more about her and where she came from.

When we got back into town, the first thing we did was check the ewe into the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in Casper. The Game and Fish said they would get us in contact with the Rawlins sheep biologist. While we waited for the biologist to get back to us, I decided to do some research about my ewe's herd. Through the Wyoming



Wild Sheep Foundation website, I found the Ferris-Seminole Bighorn Sheep Herd Objective Review, published in 2020 by the Wyoming Game and Fish. I learned that the first attempt to reintroduce bighorn sheep into this herd was in 1958. Several transplants were made in the following decades, totaling 236 sheep, all using bighorns from the migratory, high

elevation Whiskey Mountain herd near Dubois. All these transplants failed. The sheep survived modestly well, but the lambs struggled, and by 2009, the population of bighorn sheep in the Ferris-Seminole Mountains had declined to less than 15 animals (Sawyer et al 2011). The Wyoming Game and Fish biologists discovered the problem: the sheep from Dubois lambled too late in the spring, after the best forage had already dried up in the Ferris-Seminole habitat. To resolve this problem, they decided to bring in sheep from lower elevations that have their lambs earlier in the year, when vegetation is still lush and nutritious. In a subsequent interview with Kevin Hurley, Certified Wildlife Biologist & Vice President of Conservation with the Wild Sheep Foundation, he described this combination of low elevation sheep that lamb earlier in the spring, as having the "perfect mix" of traits needed to thrive in the area.

At the beginning of 2009, transplants of low elevation, early lambing, non-migratory sheep were made from either Oregon or the Devil's Canyon herd near Lovell, Wyoming. The sheep from these herds had their lambs a month or more earlier than the Dubois Sheep. When the lambs were born in the spring there was plenty of high-quality, fresh forage available for them to eat, helping them to grow strong before summer. In June, when the other lambs were born, the vegetation had already dried up.

Once the Game and Fish figured out that the sheep from the Devil's Canyon and Oregon

herds were doing better than the Whiskey Mountain herd, they started to transplant more of those sheep into these Ferris-Seminole herds. The first transplant in 2009 from Paisley, Oregon to Morgan Creek in the Seminole Mountains was a success, bringing in 20 bighorn sheep, including lambs, ewes, and rams. This was a huge boost for this herd, and the first of several successful transplants to build the foundation of the thriving herd we see today! After that, the Game and Fish brought in two transplants to the Red Hills in the Seminole Mountains—one from Devil’s Canyon, Wyoming, bringing in 12 sheep, and the other coming from John Day, Oregon, bringing in 20 sheep. This herd started growing, proving that the Game and Fish had found the “perfect mix” of genetics for the habitat. Then in March of 2015, the Game and Fish brought 25 bighorn sheep from Devil’s Canyon, Wyoming to the Red Hills in the Seminole Mountains. With this herd being a successful transplant, they decided to then transplant these low elevation, early lambing sheep into Miner’s Canyon in the Ferris Mountains. Between 2016 and 2019, several transplants brought in 89 additional sheep into the Miner’s Canyon drainage, helping this herd to reproduce and expand into much of what it is today.

Knowing what we had learned about the herd’s progression, we asked Kevin Hurley of the Wild Sheep Foundation, about the herd our ewe came from. He said he thinks that this herd has around 300 sheep today. He also talked about how important it is for the Game and Fish to continue issuing ewe sheep tags. When we asked Kevin about the

number of sheep the herd can sustain, he asked us, “How much water can you fit in a 5-gallon bucket? No more than 5 gallons.” He explained that you can’t put more sheep in an area than the habitat can support. In other words, the ewe tags are very important for this herd to stay healthy and to keep thriving in this area.

Once the Game and Fish Biologist out of Rawlins, Ashley Umphlett, got back in touch with us with the collar data, we learned that the ewe I harvested was one of the bighorns transplanted into Miner’s Canyon in 2017 from



Devil’s Canyon, Wyoming. She was 3 years old and pregnant at the time of the transplant. She was transplanted with 21 other sheep. She was 11 years old at the time I harvested her.

Over the past eight years, my ewe, and the lamb she was carrying at the time of transplant, were undoubtedly both a big part of helping this

herd grow. By successfully filling my ewe tag, I contributed to the long-term health of the herd. Hunting for ewes in Wyoming offers significant benefits for herd health, population management, and hunter access by reducing overpopulation, preventing disease die-offs, improving nutrition which leads to stronger lambs, and creating more hunting opportunities, especially in herds exceeding habitat capacity. Together, these factors lead to sustainable bighorn populations, and ultimately, healthier herds produce trophy rams.

I want to thank the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, especially biologists Kevin Hurley (WSF), Ryan Amundson (WGFD), and Ashley Umphlett (WGFD) for helping me research and learn about the bighorns in the Ferris-Seminole herd. I view the outcome of this tremendous hunt as a doorway to a lifetime of conservation work for “Putting & Keeping Bighorn Sheep on the Mountain”.

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- Kevin Hurley. Personal interview. 29 Dec. 2025.
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Douglas Creek Bighorn Sheep Herd Wildfire Study

By: Keaton Weber and Britt Burdett

The Douglas Creek bighorn sheep herd is located in Southeastern Wyoming in the Snowy Range and was reestablished on historic sheep range through three transplants occurring in 1970, 1989, and 1991, coming from the Whiskey Mountain sheep herd near Dubois. The Douglas Creek population peaked around 245 bighorn sheep in the early 1980s, then declined to around 75-100 bighorn sheep, where it has oscillated for several decades. Managers have struggled to identify the causes of the decline or to isolate factors that continue to limit population growth. Although the herd has remained below desired numbers, it does provide trophy hunting opportunities, with 3 licenses currently being issued each year.

Thanks to contributions from the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department was able to deploy nine GPS collars on ewes within the Douglas Creek herd in 2019. The focus of this collaring effort was to monitor respiratory pathogens within the herd. In the fall of 2020, the Mullen Wildfire burned over 176,800 acres in the Snowy Range and burned nearly all occupiable bighorn sheep habitat within the Douglas Creek herd unit. The wildfire likely increased line-of-sight visibility and created

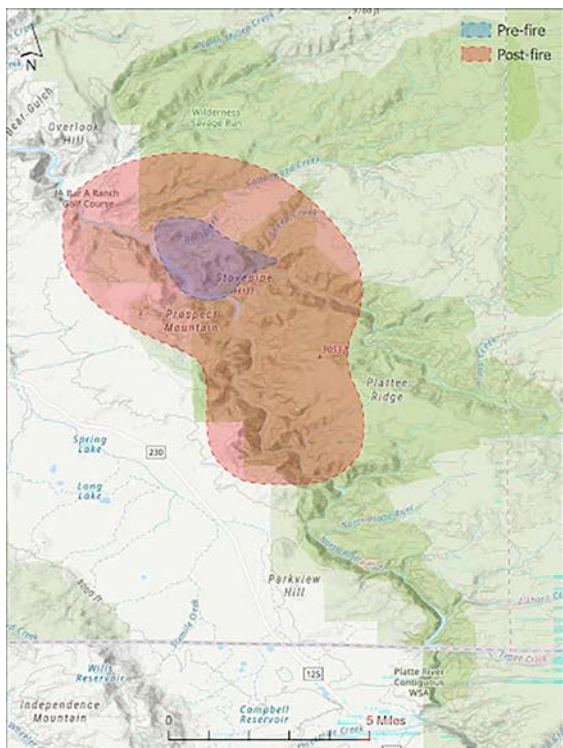
more open travel corridors for bighorn sheep, aiding their movements to escape terrain and lambing habitats. This wildfire presented managers with a unique opportunity to study whether bighorn sheep expand their home ranges post-wildfire to capitalize on these newly opened habitats.

In 2022, managers deployed another nineteen GPS collars on ewes, of which four collared individuals from 2019 were re-captured and fitted with new GPS collars. Funding for this effort was generously provided by the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation and the Wyoming Governors' Big Game License Coalition. These additional collars enabled biologists to monitor movement, habitat selection, and home-range size for the same individuals pre- and post-fire.

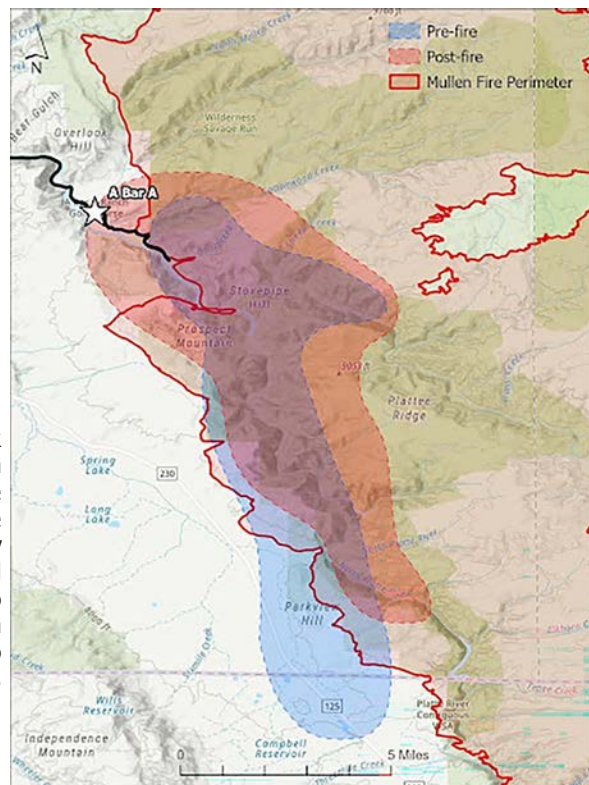
While the Mullen Wildfire may have created new habitat for bighorn sheep, it triggered concerns regarding a widespread cheatgrass invasion within the burn scar. Through collaborative efforts with the U.S. Forest Service, approximately 10,334 acres along the western slope of the Snowy Range were aerially treated with the herbicide Rejuvra in 2021. Over 6,000 of these initial acres occurred within the Savage Run

and Platte River Wilderness Areas, a major accomplishment by the U.S. Forest Service. Annual monitoring since the initial treatment shows promising recovery of native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. However, cheatgrass persists in areas where soil movement has occurred, and remains dense within the no-spray buffer around the North Platte River. Additionally, post-treatment monitoring has documented "breaks" in the original treatment, indicating the need for a re-treatment. Managers are currently developing a plan to re-treat significant portions of the burn scar in 2026 and 2027.

Preliminary results from pre- and post-fire analyses suggest that Douglas Creek bighorn sheep are expanding their use within the Mullen Wildfire burn scar. Home range comparisons for four individuals show significant increases in home range size and habitat use shifted from less desirable bighorn sheep habitat to more suitable habitat within the wildfire burn scar. Managers will continue to monitor the Douglas Creek bighorn sheep herd to determine how improved habitat quality and availability affect the population's performance.



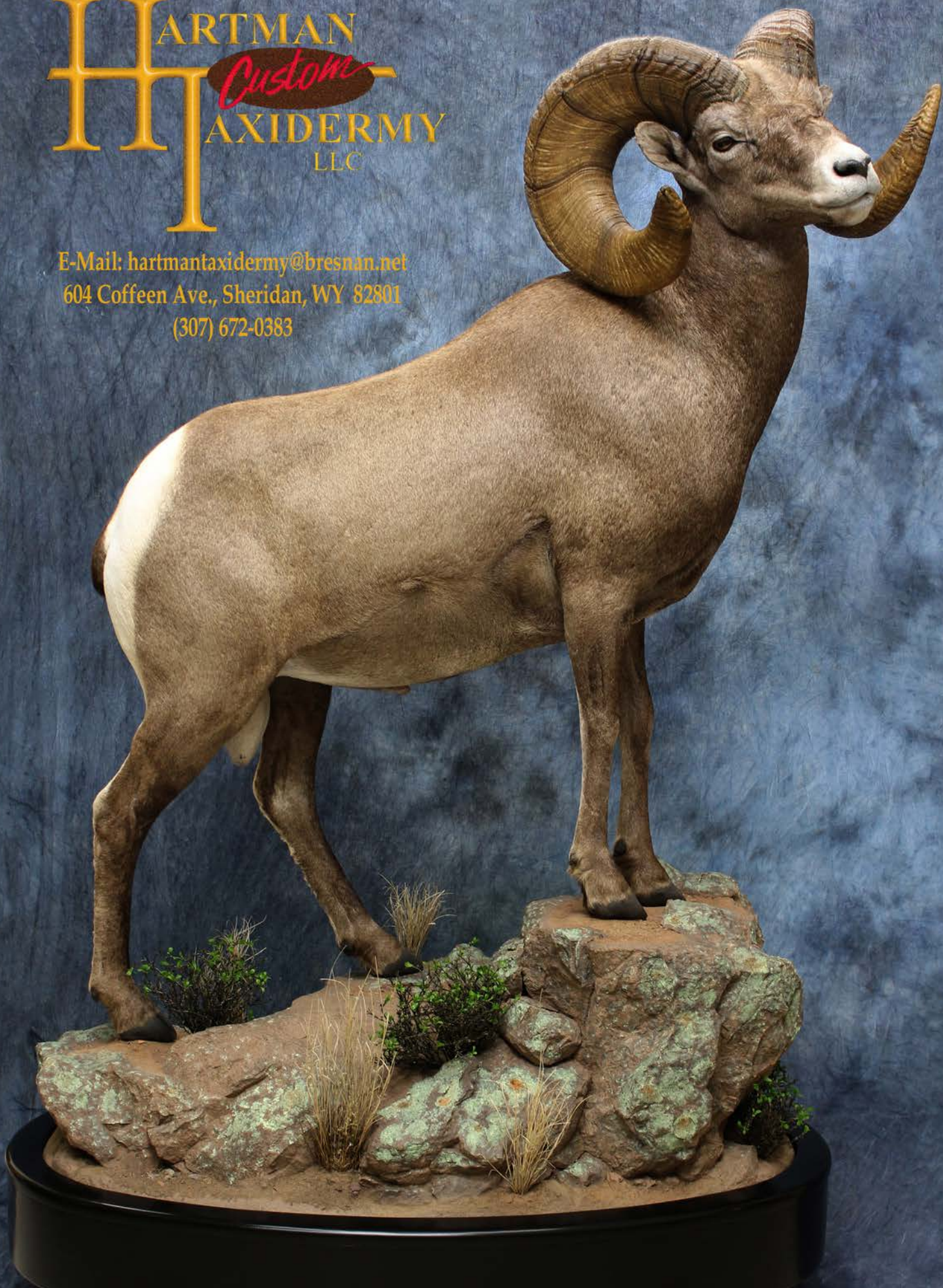
Left Image: Individual 97. The blue polygon represents this ewe's home range pre-fire and the red polygon represents her home range post-fire. Her home range size increased by 1,004% and she noticeably began utilizing more suitable habitat that had burned within the N. Platte River and Douglas Creek drainages.



Right Image: Douglas Creek Bighorn sheep herd population home range pre Mullen wildfire (blue) and post Mullen wildfire (red). This image demonstrates how this population of sheep increased their home range post fire and also shifted their use from sage brush flats around Parkview Hill/Colorado Stateline to the steep, rocky slopes of the N. Platte River drainage.

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The Luck of the Draw

By: Danyelle Pace

When draw results came out, I couldn't believe my eyes—I had drawn a bighorn sheep tag, a true once-in-a-Wyoming-lifetime opportunity. It was pure luck, and a random draw result! I knew this was going to be an adventure I would never forget.

The next few months were filled with planning: talking with experienced “sheep family” about the area, deciding when and where to go, and inviting those closest to me to join the journey. Time flew by, and before I knew it, everything had fallen perfectly into place.

We entered the Wyoming mountains with seven people—Pat Pace, Tanner Pace, Gary Butler, Scott Butler, Chance Butler, and Cash Bohannon—along with 14 horses, three

trucks with trailers, and one shared goal: make the most of every moment.

The day before opening morning, we rode 14 miles into the Absaroka Mountains. Halfway through, a pack pannier broke, but with this crew, that was no problem—a little rope and it was good as new. The scenery was breathtaking, and the serenity of the backcountry was unmatched.

Once at camp, horses were unloaded, tents were pitched, dinner was cooked, and we ended the evening around a glowing campfire under a peaceful, starlit sky.

After a peaceful night by the campfire, opening morning arrived with clear skies and

calm weather. Spotting scopes were set, and the mountains stood majestically. Two backpackers stopped by, returning a sweatshirt Cash had lost on the trail and sharing that they had seen sheep moving across the mountain.

Not long after, Chance spotted sheep on the rocky ridge above camp. After some discussion, Pat, Tanner, and I decided to make a move on the herd. We climbed to the pass and began glassing the cliffs, valleys, and hillsides, but the herd had vanished. Later we learned they had crossed over the ridge and down into a valley.

We pressed on, scanning every ledge and valley until we found a herd resting among burnt aspen trees. One ram looked



promising, but he was hidden behind an aspen, his horns invisible. We shifted ridges for a better angle, but he stayed put. Meanwhile, another ram appeared over the ridge—a fighter, full of character, standing proudly on the rocks.

I was torn. This was my once-in-a-Wyoming-lifetime hunt, and I wanted to make the right choice. After weighing the options with Pat and Tanner, I decided: the fighter was the ram.

Tanner threw down a backpack on a rocky point. I stood half bent over, with my upper body twisted to reach around the rock, while Tanner scrambled to turn on the video camera. “When he turns broadside, I’m taking the shot,” I said. Almost as if he heard me, the ram turned broadside at 108 yards. I pulled the trigger.

Sheep scattered in every direction. Tanner was devastated that he hadn’t hit record in time—but the shot was true. I had harvested a bighorn sheep! I was shaking, emotional, and in disbelief. The fighter ran down the hill and buried his horns against a burnt log. I was overwhelmed with gratitude that Pat and Tanner were by my side.

The real work began after the shot. The ram had fallen on a steep incline, making caping and quartering a challenge as daylight faded. We lowered packs down six-foot drops, ridge by ridge, until we finally made it to the creek bottom. We secured the packs at the creek bottom and decided that if we were to make it out that night, we would return in the morning to retrieve them and the rest of the meat. Finally, we saw the glow of camp lights around 10:30 p.m. Exhausted

but elated, we were greeted by congratulatory arms, and shared stories into the night.

The next day, after some rest, we packed the fighter off the mountain and celebrated with a traditional sheep camp shot of Wild Turkey—a toast to the journey.

This hunt was more than a harvest; it was a miracle day in God’s country. I’ll forever cherish the advice from my extended sheep family, the dedication of my hunting clan, the horses that made the climbs, and every moment made in those mountains.

The input that was received from multiple members of my sheep family, and the time they dedicated to speaking with me and reviewing maps, will never be forgotten. Pat, Tanner, Gary, Scott, Chance, and Cash — thank you for being by my side! To those unable to be there, I felt your presence and I know you would have been with me had you been able. Dad, thank you for holding down the homefront. You were missed.



Laramie Peak WHMA Spring Developments 2025

John Henningsen

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Funding and some of the materials were acquired in 2024, as were all permits. Additional materials were acquired in 2025. All work was completed during the summer and autumn of 2025. At four spring locations we installed 12' diameter tire tanks. Each development consisted of trenching/burying pipe to run water to the tanks, and trenching/burying pipe to deliver overflow water back to the stream or wet meadow. Every tank was fitted with heavy duty wildlife escape ramps- in particular, we securely mounted expanded steel to the inside of the outer wall of the tire.

We built wildlife-friendly fence around the Salt Creek location to exclude cattle from the spring itself - in order to minimize soil compaction and stream sedimentation. We did not build enclosures around the other springs because we have not historically witnessed cattle crowding/compaction at those sites.

WGFD staff and Vale Ranch will regularly monitor the functioning of the tanks (removing sediment in the catchments, removing obstructions of the outlet and overflow pipes, protecting against flooding and winter freeze, checking operation of valves, repairing erosion, etc.). WGFD staff will be responsible for upkeep of the enclosure fencing around the Salt Creek spring.

For more information about the WY WSF Grant Program and Projects, visit: <https://www.wyomingwildsheep.org/grants/>.

Image 1: Hay Canyon, Before Installation. January 2024.

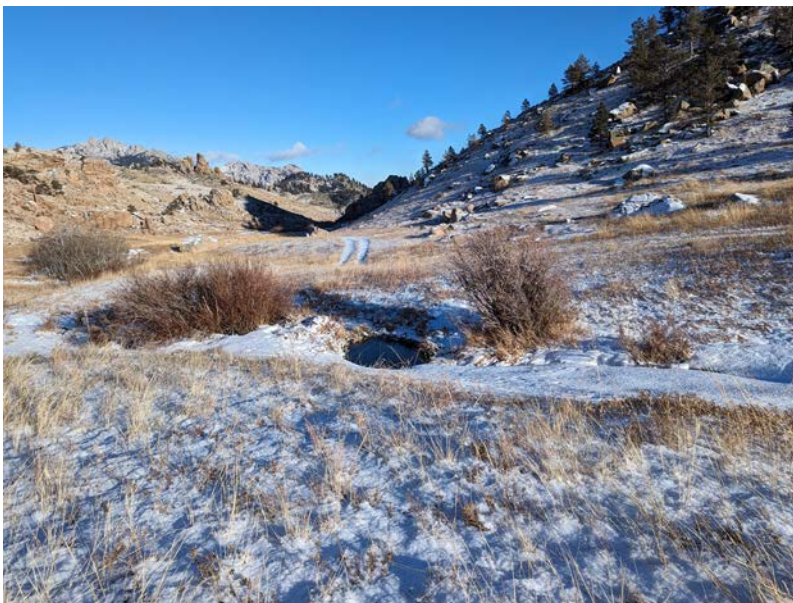


Image 2: Salt Creek, Fence After Installation. August 2025.



Image 3: Hay Canyon, After Installation. October 2025.



Teton Bighorn Sheep Nutritional Study

Ryan Martin

University of Idaho

Current Project Update:

I've attached a few photos of some of the field work we have completed as a part of this project. Luckily, I get to spend a healthy amount of time in the Teton backcountry in addition to the lab work for this project.
- Ryan Martin.

Image Right: This is a photo of myself (Ryan Martin) collecting vegetation data in the Tetons to assess forage quality and availability within the Targhee herd range. The view from the camera looks east toward Grand, South, and Middle Teton.

Image Below: This is a photo of myself (Ryan Martin) collecting vegetation data from South Cascade Canyon near Avalanche Divide in the Teton Range. Grand, Middle, and South Teton are in the background.



Image Below: This is a picture of a ram skull we found on a ridge between two high passes. The background is a bit smokey due to the Fish Creek Fire.



Image Below: This is a photo from our first year of capture and collar operations. In collaboration with the National Park Service, we collared 27 adult ewes throughout the range. The photo shows biologists processing and collecting data from ewes that were captured and transported via helicopter and net gun.



Image Below: Here is a picturesque view looking down South Cascade Canyon from Avalanche Divide.



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2025 Annual Update



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ADVANCING SCIENCE
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Wagler

Bighorn Sheep Nutrition- Disease Project

Exploring how nutrition and disease affect western Wyoming's bighorn sheep.

Large herds of bighorn sheep were once common across the rugged landscapes of western North America, but today's populations are far smaller and more restricted. Pneumonia, a respiratory disease originally introduced by domestic sheep and goats over a century ago, contributed to the population decline of bighorn sheep and remains one of the greatest conservation challenges for bighorn sheep across their range.

The effects of pneumonia, however, are far from uniform. Some herds decline rapidly and fail to ever recover, others cycle through variable crashes and recoveries, while some can tolerate infection with little loss. At the individual level, too, unique traits of the animal may shape how a sheep experiences disease. Bighorn sheep in high-quality habitats that are able to gain a lot of fat are more likely to clear their infections than animals who live in low-quality habitat and aren't able to pack on as much fat. Untangling the complex web of ecological factors that drive these differences is essential for developing effective management strategies and advancing our understanding of disease in complex wildlife systems.

Through collaboration with our partners at the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Shoshone and Arapaho Fish and Game, we are investigating how nutrition, sociality, and disease interact to influence population dynamics.

Project goals

Understand how ecological factors including nutrition, habitat quality, and social behavior influence the effect of pneumonia on bighorn sheep populations.

Work with collaborators to understand the impact of management strategies aimed at combating pneumonia.

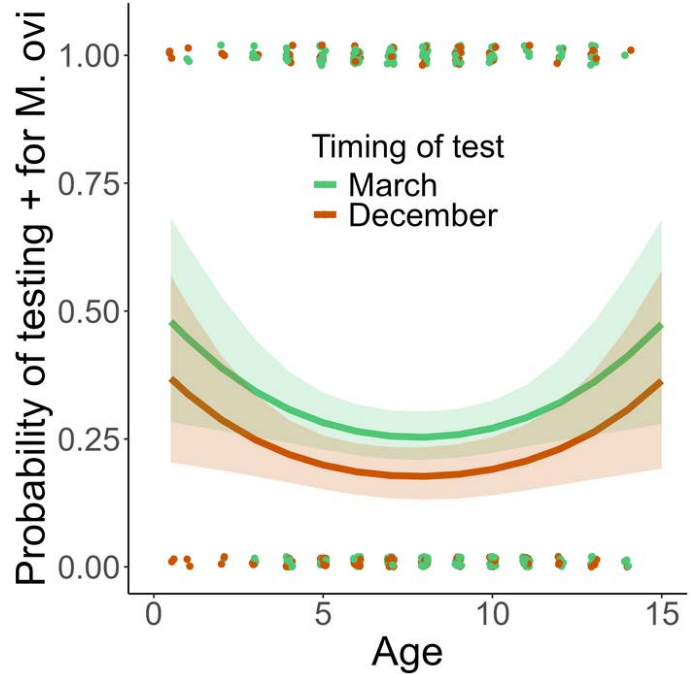
Approach

We use GPS collars, remote sensing, and intensive fieldwork to study bighorn sheep behavior, life history, and the habitats they depend on. Our monitoring strives to span the lifetime of each sheep, tracking disease status, nutritional condition, survival of both adults and lambs, and causes of mortality. By following individuals throughout their lives, we gain insights into how bighorn sheep persist in the face of disease and how this knowledge can guide management efforts.

Research finding 1: Pathogen prevalence is seasonal and has implications for management.

Wildlife managers across the West combat the devastating effects of pneumonia by judiciously removing chronically infected bighorn sheep, a strategy commonly known as “test and remove.” This strategy has been a promising tool to mitigate pneumonia, but more information will help managers implement the most effective test and remove strategies.

Using our long-term dataset of pathogen prevalence that was collected from multiple populations across Wyoming in both spring and fall, we learned that pathogen prevalence was seasonal. Bighorn sheep were over 1.5 times more likely to test positive in the spring than in the fall. Although, an animal that tested positive in the spring was less likely to test positive again the next season than an animal that tested positive in the fall. These findings show that timing is an important consideration in test and remove programs, which can limit removals of animals that may be likely to clear their infections.



The u-shaped curve shows that younger and older animals are more likely to test positive for *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (M. ovi; a pathogen strain that causes pneumonia), than animals in their prime. Across all ages, animals are more likely to test positive for M. ovi in March than in December.



Hults

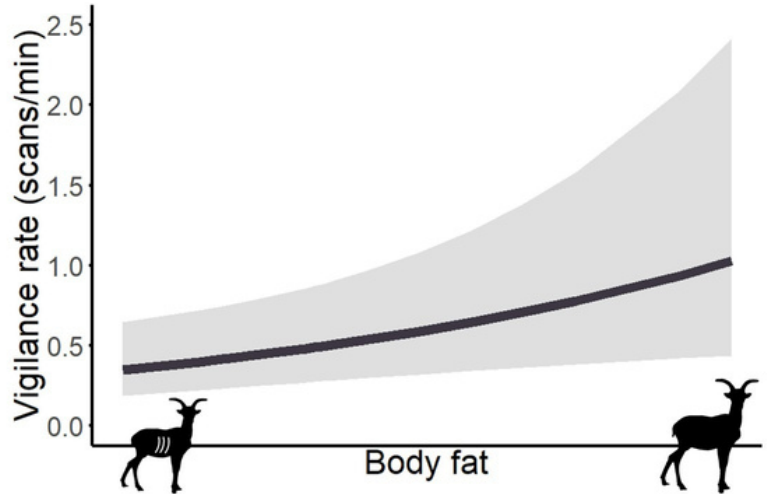


Recent finding 2: Bighorn sheep adjust how they feed depending on their fat reserves.

When bighorn sheep and other large herbivores eat, they lift their head periodically to check their surroundings. This behavior, known as vigilance, helps bighorn sheep stay aware of any approaching threats, but it presents a tradeoff. If bighorn sheep never looked up they would be sitting ducks for nearby predators, but if they are always on the look out they won't eat enough to stay alive and raise their lambs.

Bighorn sheep adjusted their vigilance behavior depending on their energetic needs, which varied based on their nutritional condition. Bighorn sheep that entered summer with more body fat had higher vigilance rates, suggesting that they are able to devote more time to predator detection while still getting all the food they need. This finding highlights the flexibility bighorn sheep have in adjusting their behavior, which is an encouraging sign for populations that contend with disease.

We are excited to continue exploring the relationship between behavior and disease and whether or not bighorn sheep use behavior as a tool to cope with the burden of fighting off disease.



Bighorn sheep that start summer with greater fat reserves are more vigilant than skinny sheep. These fat sheep are able to devote more time to predator detection while still getting enough food.



These findings result from hours and hours of observing bighorn sheep from afar. The photo to the right shows a collared ewe and her collared lamb through a spotting scope!

⋮ Upcoming work.

Bighorn sheep undergo seasonal shifts in fat reserves driven by changing food resources and environmental conditions. Building on our previous work examining how summer-range habitat influences fat reserves, we now turn to the winter period, where far less is known about how forage, varying environmental conditions, and differences in winter ranges affect pathogen prevalence, fat reserves, and ultimately survival during this harsh time of year. To tackle this gap in knowledge, we are studying what food resources are available to sheep and how sheep use those resources over winter, coupled with how bighorn sheep navigate fine-scale habitat features such as snow depth. By examining fine-scale habitat features,

we aim to reveal how winter environments influence disease vulnerability, overall health, and resilience of both individual bighorn sheep and their populations.



Wagler

Project leads



This project is led by master's student Jack Gavin (left) and master's student Ty Hults (right).

Partners and collaborators

The Bighorn Sheep Nutrition Disease Project benefits from being highly collaborative in development, operations, and funding. We are fortunate to partner with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Shoshone and Arapaho Fish and Games, collaborations through which we can pull expertise from managers, disease specialists, and ecologists. Funds have been provided by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, National Wild Sheep Foundation, Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Animal Damage Management Board, Wyoming Wildlife Livestock Disease Research Partnership, Teton Conservation District, and Bowhunters of Wyoming Inc. Special thanks to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, United States Forest Service, Wyoming State Veterinary Lab, Bureau of Land Management, National Elk Refuge, Pinto Ranch, Steve Kilpatrick, Sara Bridge, Steve and Kara Losik, and Des Brunette for assistance with logistics, lab analyses, field housing, and fieldwork.



More Than I Expected

By: Kevin Brainard

I am what I like to call a “wannabe sheep hunter”. I am always wanting to be sheep hunting, but due to “tough to draw” tags, and steep prices of hunts, my desire far outweighs my chances to get out and hunt them. I have previously harvested a Dall sheep in Alaska, went after Stone Sheep in Canada, unfortunately without a harvest, and tagged along/helped on a few other sheep hunts in my home state of Wyoming. My plan has been to try and harvest the North American Sheep Slam. To that end, I have been planning and watching the draw odds, looking for the right year to apply and draw my bighorn tag. Based on a later interest in sheep hunting, I was behind some years on points, and riding the line in Northwest Wyoming. The area it seemed I could draw had been gaining a reputation as being tough to hunt and find mature sheep. I talked with former tag holders, some friends, and a couple outfitters in the area and decided to apply for that area. It held my best odds to draw, and I was ready to sheep hunt!

I drew the tag, and while I am typically a DIY guy, and love a challenge, my experience in this part of Wyoming (or lack thereof), the vastness of the country, and the fact that it is a once in a lifetime tag, led me to decide to hire an outfitter. Having done some research, and just being a sheep hunting fan, so knowing a few of the “names” in Wyoming, led me to Jimmy Owens and Lost Creek Outfitters. Now it was up to me to do everything I could to be ready for the hunt. I try to stay in good physical shape, so I just increased my routine, spent as much time shooting as I could, and got on some horses for the first time in years. This proved to be invaluable

time spent. I also invited my hunting buddy Shawn along. We spend a fair amount of time together in the mountains, so I wanted him to also be there for the experience. I made a couple of trips to the area, did some hiking, and looked things over. This time reinforced my decision to hire Jimmy. The country is huge, and is honestly horse country.

Finally my hunt date arrived! We got to the lodge a day early, and spent the next day on a day hunt looking for sheep from the mules. With nothing but ewes and lambs spotted, we headed back to the lodge, and spent the evening preparing gear for a spike camp. With gear and stock ready for the next day, we enjoyed dinner and conversation, and then headed for bed. I did not get a lot of sleep, as the excitement and anticipation were getting to me. The next morning we arrived at the trailhead around first light, prepared the stock and our gear, and up the trail we went. It was about a 6-7 hour ride, into some of the coolest country Wyoming has

to offer. It was shocking to me to see where these mules were able to go. They were amazing animals, and just made getting back into the tougher areas possible. We arrived at the spike camp location around 2pm, set up camp, and then made our way back to a higher point to glass for the evening. The group consisted of Jimmy, the guide Chris, Shawn, and me. Chris picked up a couple young rams right away. It became very apparent very quickly that these guys are experts at finding and spotting sheep. Chris and Jimmy then glassed up some more sheep on a mountain quite a ways away. One of these looked to just be a larger ram, and when the lighting was right, appeared to have quite a bit of headgear. We continued glassing until close to dark, then headed to camp for dinner. Chris cooked up the best steak I think I have ever eaten, we discussed the plan for the morning to get closer to that group of rams, and headed to bed.

The next morning we left camp around 6:30, right at





first light, on the mules. The two smaller rams from the evening before had moved a basin, and we rode past them at about 200 yards. We took the mules, again, up a mountain I would never have guessed, and worked our way a bit closer to where we thought those rams would be. We sat down and started glassing, picking up sheep right away. There were ewes and lambs, and younger rams in pretty easy to see spots. Chris, again, picked up a band of rams that had a couple of decent rams, but not what we were after yet. Chris then located some rams that were farther out, on a high mountain, and it appeared to be either the one from the night before, or at the least a ram to get closer to. We rode the mules about a ½ mile closer, to a point that was as far as they could go. Taking another look at the rams, we loaded the packs, hobbled the mules, and headed off. We knew it was going to be a tough stalk, along a sharp ridgeline, with shale sidehilling, down rock chutes, over rocks... All the things that make sheep hunting sheep hunting. I love it. I did not realize what was in store for us though.

We got to a point about a mile

into the stalk where we had a really good look at the rams, and it was clear we needed to give this sheep our best. When seasoned sheep guides appear excited about a ram, I knew he was a good one. We worked closer, did some sidehilling on loose rock that gets the pucker factor elevated in a hurry, and came to a spot that appeared may be the end of our attempt. It was a sharp drop on both sides, and also along the ridge line. We were discussing what to do, kind of coming to terms with the idea that this may not happen, when I learned something about my guide Chris. He does not give up. He decided he would find a way, and proceeded to do just that. It was a sketchy, slippery, loose rock descent off the ridgeline, through a couple chutes where we were on our butts sliding, and basically crawling down. The crazy thing is, we made it. I did not think we would make it, but we did! At this point we were over halfway to the rams.

We continued towards the rams, mostly able to walk the ridgeline, climbing most of the way. Jimmy had stopped for a break and was glassing, when he motioned me down. The rams were up and moving

around. We stayed on the opposite side of the ridge, and made our way up to some rocks to get behind and watch the rams. We were about 600 yards from the rams at this point, and they had fed behind a little roll in the mountain. If they came our way, that roll was about 400 yards. During this, we were watching some storm clouds moving our way, and were really trying to beat them so we would not be trying to range them in rain/fog. Then, suddenly, the big ram comes walking over the ridge right towards us, followed by the rest of the rams. He was amazing, more than I had even hoped for, and unaware of us. I immediately started shaking, trying to get set up for a shot. I finally got a little perch set up over the top of the rocks, that got me mostly steady... Only issue being it required me to stretch up a little bit, and between that and the adrenalin, I had a hard time staying on him in the scope. They were still unaware of us, and had moved into under 300 yards now. I just kept waiting for a solid broadside shot. Chris was very concerned that every time I would have to relax and come off the sheep, I would then shoot the wrong ram. He and Jimmy made sure to try and keep me on the right one, though he was pretty much etched into my brain what he looked like. One of the times Chris moved over to make sure I was on the right one, two of the smaller rams spotted us. They locked onto us. The big one looked our way but did go back to feeding. We knew things could blow up at any point now. I got on the big one and just waited for a shot. He finally turned a bit, offering a quartering shot to me, so I put it on the point of his shoulder and squeezed it off. He instantly went down, rolling a couple hundred yards. I had a brief emotional release, yelling and giving out hugs. I remembered wondering what the plan was going to be to get him out of this spot, and now that thought

was going to play itself out.

We radioed Shawn, who had stayed back, that the ram was down, but it was going to be a late night. We made our way to the ram, down the loose rocks to where he stopped. He was even better than I thought. He was exceptional in every way. Jimmy aged him at 11-12, he had exceptional mass that he carried his entire length, and had a tank of a body. He had some very cool scarring on his nose, that upon investigation was caused by a bullet that had also went through his horn. What an amazing life this animal had lived. At this time, it started to spit rain on us as those storm clouds reached us. We worked to break him down and get him in bags ready for the pack out. It was just starting to get dark now. We had left the mules around 10am, I shot him around 5pm, and it was now 6:30 pm or so. I had taken my final drink of water right before I shot the ram.

We determined there was no way we could go back up the mountain, we could not take him down, due to a drop off, and that our option was to sidehill it for a mile or so back to reunite with our path from the stalk. Seemed reasonable. We started out, in the rain, fog, and impending darkness. We were all pretty tired from the hike just to get to him, and now we were staring the backtracking, in the rain, fog, and dark. I do not think there are any words to explain how brutal the pack out was. It is just an experience you would have to do to truly understand. Side hilling on loose gravel on a mountain that, if you slip and fall, you will most likely die, for miles is exhausting, both physically and mentally. You cannot relax for even a second. Every move is planned and requires concentration. I remember thinking how dangerous it was, but also how cool it will be to know I did that. The story I will have every time I look at that

ram, every time I look at the pictures. About halfway back, we found a rock outcropping we thought we could get under and wait for morning. With no wood or anything to start a fire anywhere near, we just wanted to get out of the fog and wind. We made it about an hour, wearing all the clothes we had, before we all got too cold to sit still. The fog had lifted, and we could at least see a ways with our headlamps. Back after it we went.

It was about this time, I really started questioning myself, and whether I had it in me to continue this trek. Climbing back up chutes, slipping on those sidehills, climbing over the rocks. I just kept talking to myself, telling me to stop whining, this is the coolest thing I have ever done, and just put my head down and go. When I topped out of the last chute, could see Shawn's headlamp, and knew it was just a flat walk to him, I almost cried. What a pack out. What a hunt. We got the mules loaded, and made the ride back to camp, arriving at 6:30am, a full 24 hours after we left. I collapsed into my bed and went immediately to sleep. We spent a lazy day around camp, had good conversation, a good

fire, and good food. The next morning we got up, packed up camp, and headed out.

There are certain things that stick with a guy after a hunt like this. I will never forget that ram walking over the ridge towards us. They are just the coolest animals, where they live, their horns, their faces, just gorgeous. I will always have locked into my memory bank, the memory of being able to just pull it all together, this razor focus and making the shot. The complete exhaustion at the end of the pack out. All of these things are what make a sheep hunt a sheep hunt. It's amazing. It teaches you about yourself. It creates memories of a lifetime. It is why I love it.

This does not happen without Jimmy, Chris, and Lost Creek Outfitters. Their knowledge of the area and the sheep was invaluable. They kept me going when I was not sure if I could. They made this hunt so much more than I expected, and far exceeded every hope I had. I could never thank them enough for this experience. Also, to my amazing wife, who puts up with my sheep obsession and always supports me, you deserve all of the best things. Thank you.



Sweetwater Rocks Initiative Update

By: Matt Hoobler



Sweetwater Rocks: Update on Progress

Progress continues with the proposed reintroduction of bighorn sheep into the Sweetwater Rocks of central Wyoming. From ongoing landowner conversations to project planning and implementation, the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation continues to build upon a strong foundation with these consistent actions. While we feel the current state policies provide an adequate framework, we support the ongoing policy efforts and are using this time to ensure the Sweetwater Rocks habitat is ready for a successful bighorn sheep reintroduction.

Cheatgrass in the Sweetwater Rocks

Cheatgrass is a highly invasive annual grass that severely degrades and denudes western ecosystems, especially within habitat for Wyoming's wild sheep. Cheatgrass outcompetes native vegetation, monopolizes soil moisture, and destroys crucial habitats for wildlife. It offers little to no forage for wildlife or livestock.

Cheatgrass, along with other annual forbs and grasses, are detected and analyzed for canopy cover changes using the Rangeland Analysis Platform: Sentinel-2 (RAP-S2). The RAP is a free application utilizing USDA Climate Hubs and Landsat satellite imagery to map vegetation cover across western U.S. rangelands with a 5-day revisit timeframe.

In the Sweetwater Rocks Invasive Annual Grass Preliminary Analysis:

2020-2024¹, the canopy cover of an anticipated restoration area for wild sheep was mapped based on 2020 and 2024 imagery. An increase or decrease in cover class between 2020 and 2024 was detected and reported as a percentage of change.

The result of the survey shows that 22% of the Sweetwater Rocks area of survey had converted from zero presence of annual forbs and grasses to a cover class with detectable presence of annual forbs and grasses from 2020 to 2024. Fifty-four percent (54%) of pixels had increased in cover class value overall, with 38% showing no change in cover class. Eight percent (8%) of the pixels showed a decrease in annual forbs and grasses and were primarily within riparian areas. The unfortunate and greatest change in annual forbs and grasses, with a 22% increase, was from 0.1 to 5% canopy cover to 5 to 10% canopy cover. This change demonstrates that over a 5-year period that one out of five acres of the Sweetwater Rocks doubled the amount of annual forbs or grasses, with cheatgrass being the primary culprit.

It's not all doom and gloom, however. With the proposed reintroduction of wild sheep into the Sweetwater Rocks, resources will increase to address the spread of cheatgrass throughout the area. Through its Grants in Aid Program, the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation has spent over \$175,000 since 2023 on cheatgrass removal in Wyoming.

Sweetwater Rocks Predator Control

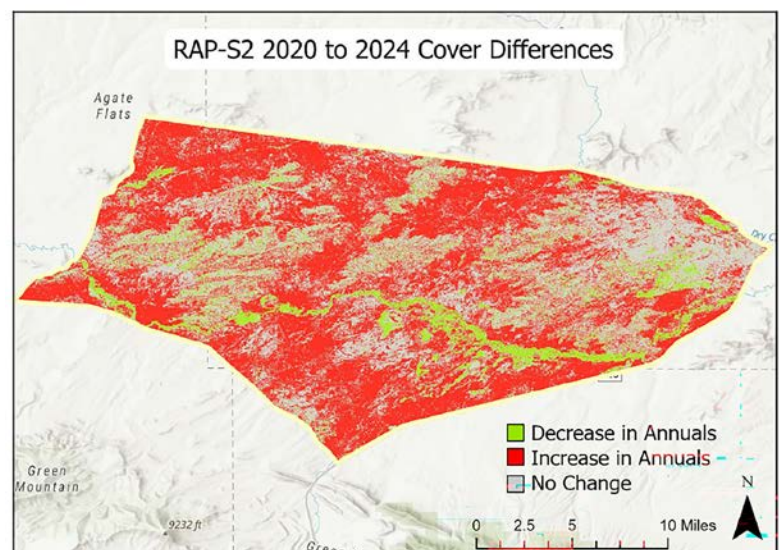
In the spring of 2025, the Natrona County Predator Board utilized funding provided by the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation for aerial

gunning of coyotes within the Sweetwater Rocks. The goal was to assess the population severity of coyotes within the location of the proposed introduction of bighorn sheep to ultimately improve bighorn sheep survival and over-summer lamb recruitment. Following the initial 5-hour flight, 52 coyotes were removed from the Sweetwater Rocks by the Natrona County Predator Board, with additional flights to follow.

Wyoming Statute 11-19-605 (2024)

Senate File 118 from the 2024 Wyoming Legislative Session was signed into law by Governor Gordon on March 22, 2024. The law codifies actions already occurring with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to provide the expedient removal of bighorn sheep that stray outside the Sweetwater Rocks Cooperative Review Area. The law had a delayed start of January 1, 2026, to allow for any federal law development to complement these state-level assurances now in place. Currently, draft federal language was circulated within parties of the Wyoming Domestic Sheep/Bighorn Sheep Interaction Working Group (IWG) and was presented to Wyoming's Congressional delegation.

(¹Holey, L., Mattilio, C., and Mealor, B. (2025). University of Wyoming Institute for Managing Annual Grasses Invading Natural Ecosystems)





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Wild Sheep Conservation

Species-Specific Conservation: Why?

By: Bralli Clifford



Greg and Bralli Clifford Packing Sheep Off the Mountain.

My hunting journey didn't begin until I was nearing my 30th birthday. Being introduced to big game hunting at that point in my life could have taken many directions and produced many different outcomes. In my case, the desire to spend more time outdoors, provide healthy organic meat for my family, wander the mountains and hills observing wildlife in their native habitats, and eventually travel across the United States—and even internationally—meeting new people and experiencing different cultures, prevailed. I became, in every sense of the word, a hunter.

It wasn't until nearly a decade later, however, that the conservation aspects of hunting truly began to take shape in my heart and mind.

Unless you have traversed a

mountainside in pursuit of wild sheep—whether as the tag holder or as part of the support team—it is nearly impossible to fully explain the profound impact a sheep hunt can have on your life. Unlike your favorite fishing hole or secret elk spot, sheep hunting is a team sport. When friends, family, and sometimes even acquaintances hear that you have drawn a sheep

tag, everyone rallies behind you. People offer advice if they have hunted the area before, recommend guides known for exceptional experiences, volunteer horses or mules to pack in camp, or offer to serve as camp cook or pack out meat.

As a result, the hunter is just one member of a larger team—each person sharing in what is often a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

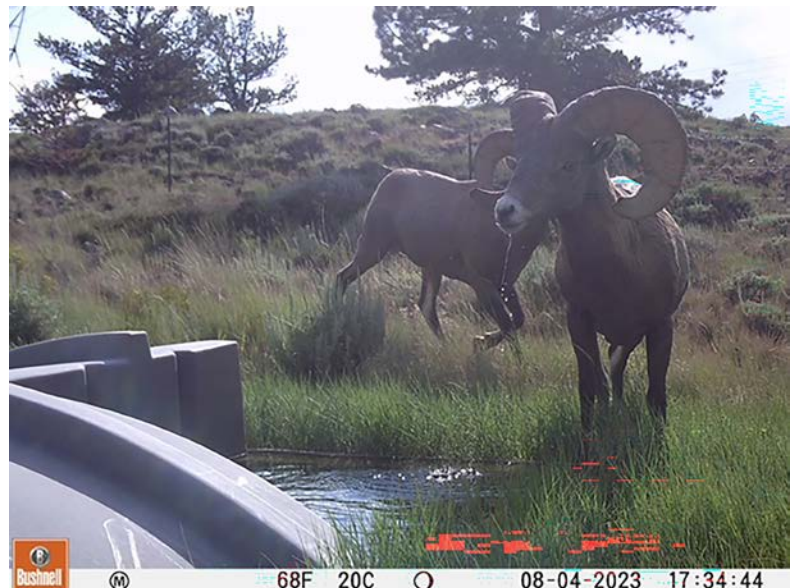
My deeper understanding of wildlife conservation began while attending banquets across Wyoming. Organizations such as

the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, the Mule Deer Foundation, Muley Fanatic Foundation, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation opened my eyes. Listening to speakers and board members explain the “why” behind conservation—and how dollars raised translate directly into on-the-ground projects—sparked something in me.

That interest evolved into action. With encouragement from friends and former board members of the Wyoming Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation, I eventually ran for a board position for Wyoming Wild Sheep and now also serve on the Wild Sheep Foundation's Board of Directors. I often say, “If I am fortunate enough to take them off the mountain and enjoy them in their habitat, then it is my responsibility to do all I can to ensure they remain on the mountain for others.”

So how does species-specific conservation work—and is there real benefit to focusing

Bighorn Sheep at a Water Project.





There are sheep in the back on the right of this photo, within 50 yards of a guzzler project from WY-WSF.

efforts on wild sheep?

The answer is complex, but in short: yes. Investing in wild sheep conservation works, and the benefits are significant.

Wild sheep are an iconic species—one none of us want to lose from the landscape. Yet they remain vulnerable: to disease, predation, habitat loss, harsh climate conditions, and political challenges. When you focus conservation efforts on this species—knowing you may never personally draw a tag—you are helping ensure their future. Despite the limited number of hunting opportunities, funding consistent, science-based conservation work expands and enhances populations. At minimum, your children and grandchildren will continue to experience the awe of seeing wild sheep on the mountainside.

Importantly, habitat, water development, and research projects rarely benefit only one species. I have never seen a guzzler visited exclusively by

wild sheep. Trail cameras capture deer, elk, antelope, coyotes, mountain lions, skunks, badgers, birds, and more. Cheatgrass removal improves forage not just for sheep, but for every ungulate in the region. Research focused on sheep often reveals insights that improve management practices for multiple species, strengthening entire ecosystems.

As mentioned earlier, sheep hunting is a team sport—and so is conservation. Every contributor,



Live Photo of Greg's Ram.

whether a hunter, supporter, or observer, benefits from healthy wildlife populations.

It's easy to say, "I'll likely never draw a sheep tag, so why should I invest in their conservation?" While that sentiment is understandable, the reality is this: without species-focused dollars over the past 40-plus years, many of the

sheep hunting opportunities that exist today in Wyoming would not be possible. Sheep populations would be lower, and opportunities even fewer.

Without continued species-specific conservation—and without your dollars on the ground—we risk losing wild sheep from the landscape altogether.

This iconic and limited resource deserves our focus, our energy, and our financial support to ensure both longevity and growth.

I want to personally thank each of you who has contributed—whether \$1 or thousands of dollars—in support of wild sheep conservation. And I humbly ask you to continue. Attend our banquets. Purchase raffle tickets. Enroll your friends and family as members of the WY-WSF. Contribute to our magazine. Include our organization in your estate planning. Volunteer your time for projects or committees.

Wild sheep deserve our focused efforts. Species-specific conservation ensures they remain where they belong—on the mountain.



A Fuzzy Eared Lamb.



Roy Roath Memorial Firearms Auction Ends 4/30/26

Roy Roath was Ramshorn Society Life Member #689. Upon his death, he bequeathed these firearms to the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation with the goal of reaching \$500,000 in our conservation fund.



All firearms in this auction have been obtained from third parties. The purchaser acknowledges that the goods have not been inspected by WY-WSF. It is advised in the case of weapons to obtain a competent inspection and test of the goods before use. The goods sold in auction are sold "AS IS" with all faults and defects, and without any express or implied warranty on the part of WY-WSF. WY-WSF provides no warranties of fitness and expressly disclaims the same. WY-WSF does not accept any liability or responsibility for any product, design, or use. It shall be the buyer's responsibility to pay for shipping from our FFL to theirs and these charges will be added to the final bid price.

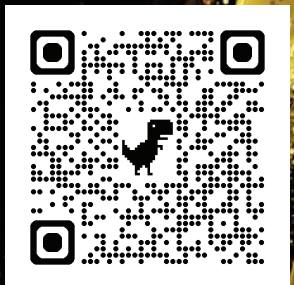


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Wyoming WSF 42nd Banquet!

June 6, 2026 - 5PM
at the Casper Events Center.
Reserve your table today - \$1250



Perks include - 2026 Reserved Seating!
Your Full Curl Table will have 10 place settings.

You also receive: 2 new or annual membership renewals,
2 Governor's Moose License raffle tickets, 1 Stone Sheep Raffle ticket
and \$100 in Snowy Mtn Gun raffle tickets plus
2 bottles of wine at your table,

1 chance to win a Full Curl Gun Raffle for every 10 Full Curl Tables registered,
A table reservation sign with your name on it and recognition in our program.
A company's business card or logo and contact information will be posted on our
Sponsor's page.

Visit <https://casper26.givesmart.com> to register.
or call Mike at (307) 258-7040 or Dean at (307)213-0998.
Checks welcomed made out to WY-WSF and mailed to P.O. Box 666, Cody, WY 82414

2025/2026 Membership Incentive Contest



Dear Wild Sheep Enthusiast,

Your support plays a vital role in our mission to *Put and Keep Wild Sheep on the Mountain.*

The **Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation** is dedicated specifically to conserving and growing bighorn sheep herds in the Cowboy State. **Wyoming membership funds real, local projects** like disease monitoring, habitat improvement, and transplants in the Sweetwater Rocks, and beyond.

Purchase a Wyoming Membership and You're in the Running for \$8,500 worth of gear!

**Note, cash donations are accepted for current members and will result in equivalent entries to win*
Winners will be drawn in **June 2026** and contacted directly by one of our board members to get you geared up and ready for your next mountain hunt. (Yes — monthly payments are available on Life and Ramshorn Society memberships, as long as you're paid in full by June 2026.)

3-Year Member (\$100) = 1 Entry to Win

Life Member (\$750) = 5 Entries to Win

**Senior Life Memberships (\$500)*

Ramshorn Society Member (\$1,250) = 10 Entries to Win **Senior Ramshorn Memberships (\$1000)*

Grand Prize – \$5,000 Gear Credit

Second Prize – \$2,500 Gear Credit

Third Prize – \$1,000 Gear Credit

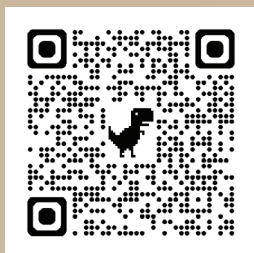
Winners get to choose what you need from our gear partners: Kifaru Intl, Maven Optics, Weatherby Rifles, & Stone Glacier

You can sign up or upgrade online at www.wyomingwildsheep.org/join

Support bighorn sheep conservation where it matters most – right here at home in Wyoming.

For the sheep,

Bralli Clifford
Board President



2026 Conservation Fund Rifle Raffle Henry X Model 45-70 in Government



\$100 Each

The Henry X Model in .45-70 Government is a modernized, “tactical” take on the classic lever-action rifle, designed for rugged use and high customization.

Quick Specifications

Action: Lever-action with an enlarged loop for use with gloves.

Loading: Dual-source loading via a side gate or a removable 4-round tube magazine.

Barrel: 19.8” blued steel, threaded (5/8x24) for suppressors or muzzle brakes.

Furniture: Weather-resistant black synthetic stock featuring a soft rubber recoil pad.

Attachments: Fore-end includes integrated M-Lok slots and a Picatinny rail.

Sights: High-visibility fiber-optic sights; receiver is drilled and tapped for optics.

Weight: Approximately 7.4 lbs.

For detailed technical specs and pricing, you can visit the official

[Henry Repeating Arms X Model page.](#)

Click to Purchase



All proceeds from this raffle will be deposited into the Conservation Fund and will help put and keep wild sheep on the mountain.

Drawing date is June 6, 2026, you need not be present to win. If necessary, shipping will be paid for by the winner. This raffle is void where prohibited by law.





High Country Alaska Drawing Winner's Choice Dall Sheep or Trophy Moose



*Fantastic 10 Day Trophy Dall Sheep or Moose Hunt Opportunity!
Includes Charter & Bush Flights to/from Anchorage.
Experienced Guides & Pilots, Moose Hunt: 6x6 UTV's,
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Dall Sheep Hunt Dates: Early August, 2027 or 2028
Moose Hunt Dates: September, 2028 or 2027 if Available
Bison, Grizzly, Caribou, Black Bear Options Available*

**Click to
Purchase**

**Visit - High Country Alaska
www.highcountryalaska.com**

**** Tickets: \$150 Each - 650 Tickets Available
Drawing Date: Sept 1, 2026**

Friday Night Rendezvous

Friday, June 5 at the RamKota in Casper, WY
800 N. Poplar Street



Guest Speaker!

5:00 pm -- Doors open, cocktails & games

6:30 pm -- Dinner

7:00 pm -- Speaker: Dr. Kevin Monteith

**Games - Raffles - Relax -
Visit**

Dr. Kevin Monteith is a researcher and professor at the University of Wyoming's Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Zoology and Physiology. Dr. Monteith's research focuses on integrating nutrition, population, and quantitative ecology to understand behavior, resource allocation, and life history of large mammals. He founded the Monteith Shop which focuses on providing a scientific basis for management and conservation of ungulates. His research in wild sheep includes pathogen research for pneumonia outbreaks, the impacts from predators and outdoor

recreation on wild sheep, and many other relevant topics. He has been awarded the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust Partner of the Year and has various acknowledgements from the Wildlife Society and the Pope & Young Club. Dr. Monteith is an author or co-author on over 150 scientific publications.



Photo By Mark Gocke
Wyoming G&F Dept.

Click to Register

Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation 42nd Annual Convention June 5 & 6, 2026 Casper, WYO



**Guest Speakers, Live & Silent Auctions, Games, Raffles.
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Photo by Mark Gocke, WYO G&F Dept.





Photograph: Dan Quinn



2026 WY-WSF / Snowy Mountain Rifle Raffle Win a Custom Long-Range Rifle for Just \$5

Enter for a chance to win a fully custom-built rifle from Snowy Mountain Rifles, valued at over \$10,000—featuring a ½ MOA accuracy guarantee, industry-leading craftsmanship, and exceptional customer service.

Rifle Build Details

The winner can choose either the Long Range Hunter Pro or Long Range Hunter 4.0 configuration with the following options:

- Stock/Chassis: Manners LRH Stock or XLR Element 4.0 (Chassis)
- Barrel: SMR Carbon Sendero – 20", 22", or 24"
- Bottom Metal: BDL or detachable magazine for Manners LRH. (XLR Element 4.0 is magazine only)
- Caliber Options: 6.5 PRC, 7 PRC, or .300 PRC
- Build Includes:
 - SMR F-22R stainless action with integrated 20 MOA rail
 - TriggerTech Special trigger
 - SMR Titanium 3-port muzzle brake
 - Load development included
 - \$250 Cerakote allowance
- Nightforce C624 4-32x50mm scope (TMOA reticle, 30mm tube)
- ARC rings, FLO bubble level (mounted)
- SKB hard case with custom laser-cut foam



Additional Info

- Visit Snowy Mountain Rifles to explore the rifle builds and specifications.
- Unlimited ticket purchases—buy as many as you'd like to support wild sheep conservation in Wyoming!
- Drawing Date: June 6, 2026 at the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation Banquet in Casper, WY
- Winner is responsible for shipping, FFL transfer, and any applicable taxes or fees.





2026 Wyoming Governor's Moose Hunt Raffle



Donated by Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon.

By regulation, a Wyoming Governor's Moose License is only valid in open hunt areas with more than 10 Type 1 (any or antlered) moose licenses issued.

In 2025, this license would have been valid in 11 hunt areas: 2, 3, 5, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, and 38. These hunt areas account for over 70% of annual Shiras moose harvest in Wyoming.

The number of licenses issued by hunt areas MAY change from year to year.

Season dates and license numbers for 2026 will be finalized by the WGF Commission in April 2026.

For further information, please contact Tim Thomas at the Wyoming Game and Fish department.

Phone - (307) 751-1249 Email - tim.thomas@wyo.gov

\$100 per ticket
1000 will be sold

Drawing on June 6, 2026 at the WY-WSF Convention. You need not be present to win. Visit our raffle page by scanning the QR code Checks accepted made out to WY-WSF, P.O.Box 666, Cody, WY 82414. Questions? (307)213-0998



Wyoming Wild Sheep
Foundation

42nd Annual Convention

YOUTH EVENTS

**SATURDAY
JUNE 6TH**

FORD WYOMING
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CASPER, WY
11 AM-4 PM

In partnership with

NATIONAL BIGHORN SHEEP CENTER
DR. RYAN BROCK, WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION



LASER SHOT



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Gunwerk's Newest Firearm

2026 WYO Governor's BHS License

2 - 2026 Commissioner's Licenses

2026 WYO Governor's Bison License

Al Campo - Desert BHS Hunt 2027-2029

Costa Rica - 5 day/4 night fishing/resort lodging for 6

Abaco, Bahamas - 7 night Excursion for four

Elena Johnson - Performance original art piece

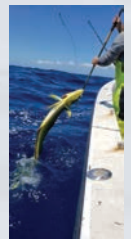
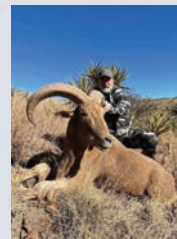
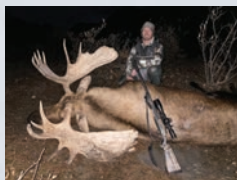
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◀ WYOMING ▶
WILD SHEEP
FOUNDATION



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Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation Live and Online!

Casper, WY on June 6.

TEXT: wywsf2026 to 702-935-1993

<https://www.onlinehuntingauctions.com/WY-WSF-2026-as113787>



24th Annual Life Member Breakfast

June 6, 2026 beginning at 7:15 at the
Ford Convention Center in Casper, Wyoming

*Note: You must be a Life or Ramshorn Life Member to attend and qualify
for the prize drawings!*

Guest Speaker: Jim Zumbo

Firearms, Games, Raffles, Live & Silent Auction

**Celebrate your Life Membership at our Annual Thank You
Breakfast**

Life Members may win a GETAWAY trip for 6 to Cancun!

RHS members may win a \$1500 Floor Credit, raffle tickets & more.

LMB donors will also be entered into special prize drawings

**Thank you Lander Life Members!
Our LMB Sponsors for 2026!**

[Click to Register](#)



2026 Freddie Goetz Photo Contest

Bring your favorite photo to the banquet and win one of three prizes! Photos may be in color or black and white, no larger than 11 X 14, put your name on the rear of the photo, no frames please. No more than 5 entries per person.

In Honor of RHS LM #6, Freddie Goetz.



Prizes!

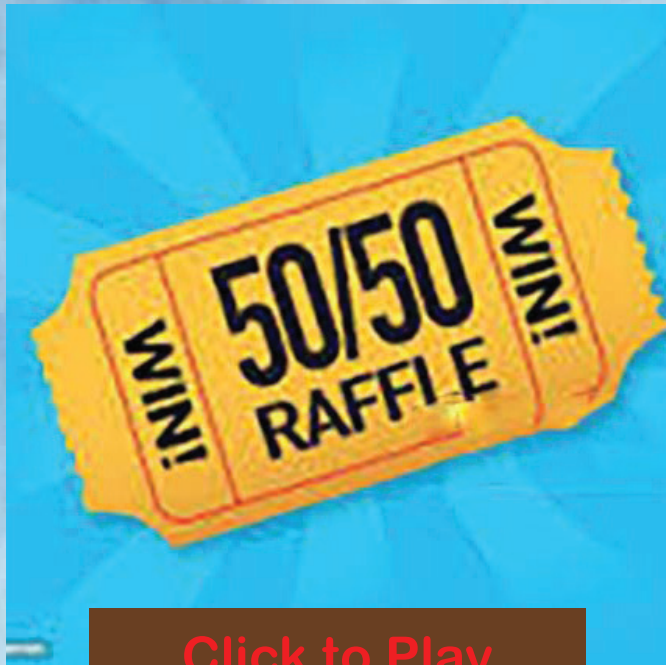
A cup of General Raffle
Tickets
Moose Raffle Ticket
Conservation gun ticket

Contest Rules:

Each registered guest at our Saturday, June 6, 2026 Banquet may vote one time by completing a paper ballot at the Photo Contest.

Winners will be announced during the Banquet. You must be present at the Banquet to win.

Photo by Mark Gocke



[Click to Play](#)

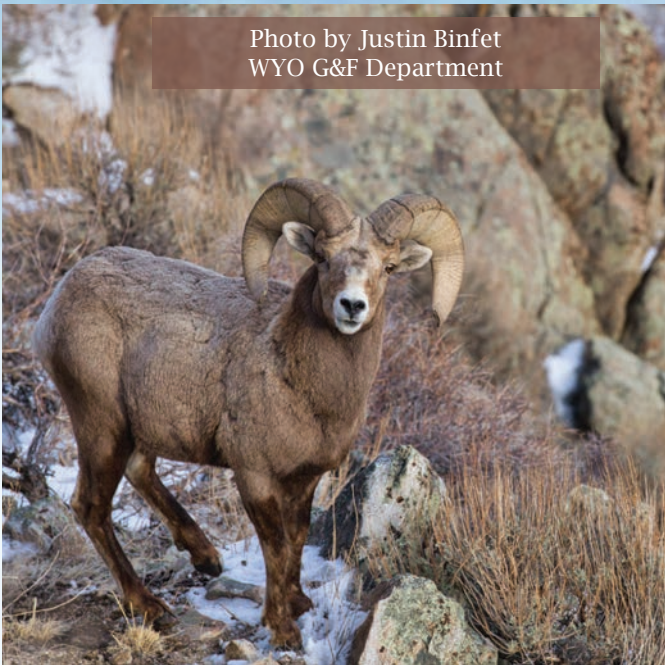


Photo by Justin Binfet
WYO G&F Department



Photo by Amy Anderson
WYO G&F Department



◀ WYOMING ▶
WILD SHEEP
FOUNDATION

Help WY-WSF raise money for Wild Sheep Projects in Wyoming. We will split the proceeds of this raffle in half with the winner!

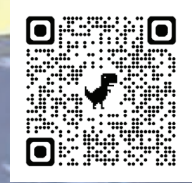
Our drawing will be on June 6, 2026 at the Annual Convention. You need not be present to win.

- 1 for \$20**
- 5 for \$50**
- 15 for \$100**
- 50 for \$200**



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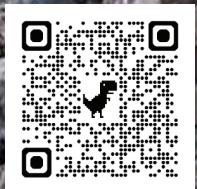


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WILD SHEEP
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\$200**

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SHEEP
2027**



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Owners - Michael Porter RHS Life member #323

Stacie Porter Life Member #381



Thank you to Golden Bear Outfitters for a GREAT Mountain Goat Hunt. Thank you to Blake Williams outfitter and Cole Britz, my guide, for making my dream come true. Great people, beautiful location in British Columbia and lots of goats!
RHS LM Dale (Tuffy) Sims



A big **THANK YOU** to Blake Williams, Golden Bear Outfitters and guide Sid McWilliams for an outstanding Mountain Goat hunt. The experience could not have been better.
RHS LM Ray Lozier

Ferris-Seminoe Bighorn Sheep Monitoring Update

By: Teal Cufaude
Wyoming Game and Fish Department



Marked Ferris-Seminoe bighorn sheep ewe observed during the November 2025 rut.

The Ferris-Seminoe Herd

The Ferris-Seminoe Bighorn Sheep Herd Unit holds a unique status in Wyoming: it is the state's only herd currently free of pathogens such as *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae*. This makes it an essential resource for future bighorn sheep reintroduction and transplant efforts throughout Wyoming. Following the 2019 Pedro Mountain Fire, the resulting habitat has been enticing bighorn sheep to move north of the herd unit, potentially bringing them closer to domestic sheep and increasing the risk of disease transmission. To safeguard this vital population, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) has

ramped up its monitoring efforts, which are generously funded by the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation and the Wyoming Governor's Big

Game License Coalition.

Key Monitoring and Analysis Updates

As part of the Ferris-Seminoe Bighorn Sheep Monitoring Project, WGFD managers have collared and GPS ear-tagged bighorn sheep ewes and rams to track their movements, especially into the re-vegetated Pedro Mountains. From 2020 to 2024, 28 bighorn sheep were collared in the Bennett Mountains and Miracle Mile area. In winter 2024-2025, 20 additional bighorn sheep were GPS tagged/collared in the Bennett and Miracle Mile area, with 24 more collars deployed across other parts of the herd unit. These collars and GPS ear tags will be maintained through 2026.

Recent and ongoing analyses of collar data are providing vital

Example of GPS locations transmitted every 2 hours via a GPS ear tag on a Ferris-Seminoe bighorn sheep ram.





Ferris-Seminoe bighorn sheep ram marked with both a GPS ear tag and a GPS collar in winter 2024-2025. This dual-marking was implemented on two rams to compare the efficacy of the newer GPS ear tag technology with the established GPS collar technology.

information for management. The Omniscape Analysis predicts movement between

sub-herds to understand the landscape-level transmission of disease, and the Risk of Contact Tool estimates the sex-specific probability of a bighorn sheep moving into a domestic allotment. These analyses are crucial for understanding how disease could spread among herds, which informs decisions regarding population size, density, and the need for future transplants. The Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation



Ferris-Seminoe bighorn sheep ram, tagged with a new GPS ear tag in winter 2025-2026. The updated ear tag shuttles (tan) are designed to minimize the loss of the tags.

provided significant funding for these analyses, similar to their contribution to the Ferris-Seminoe Bighorn Sheep Monitoring Project. WGFD plans to continuously update these analyses using the collar data collected from the Ferris-Seminoe Bighorn Sheep Monitoring Project (2020-present). Furthermore, they aim to enhance these datasets with more precise location data, particularly from bighorn sheep exhibiting foraging or wandering behavior.

Looking Ahead:
Population Assessment

The herd is managed with a mid-winter trend count objective of 240 to 360 animals, with the current three-year average sitting at 278 bighorn sheep. Traditional aerial trend counts are becoming increasingly difficult. To ensure accurate population data, WGFD is launching a new plan to conduct an aerial survey using established sightability-correction methods. Furthermore, they are developing a sightability model specific to Wyoming bighorn sheep habitats, utilizing the deployed GPS collars to conduct trial runs. This innovative methodology will establish a stable, long-term monitoring framework. It is expected to allow intensive, resource-intensive surveys to occur only every 5 years instead of annually, resulting in significant long-term cost reduction while maintaining high-quality, reliable population data for management decisions.

Dreams

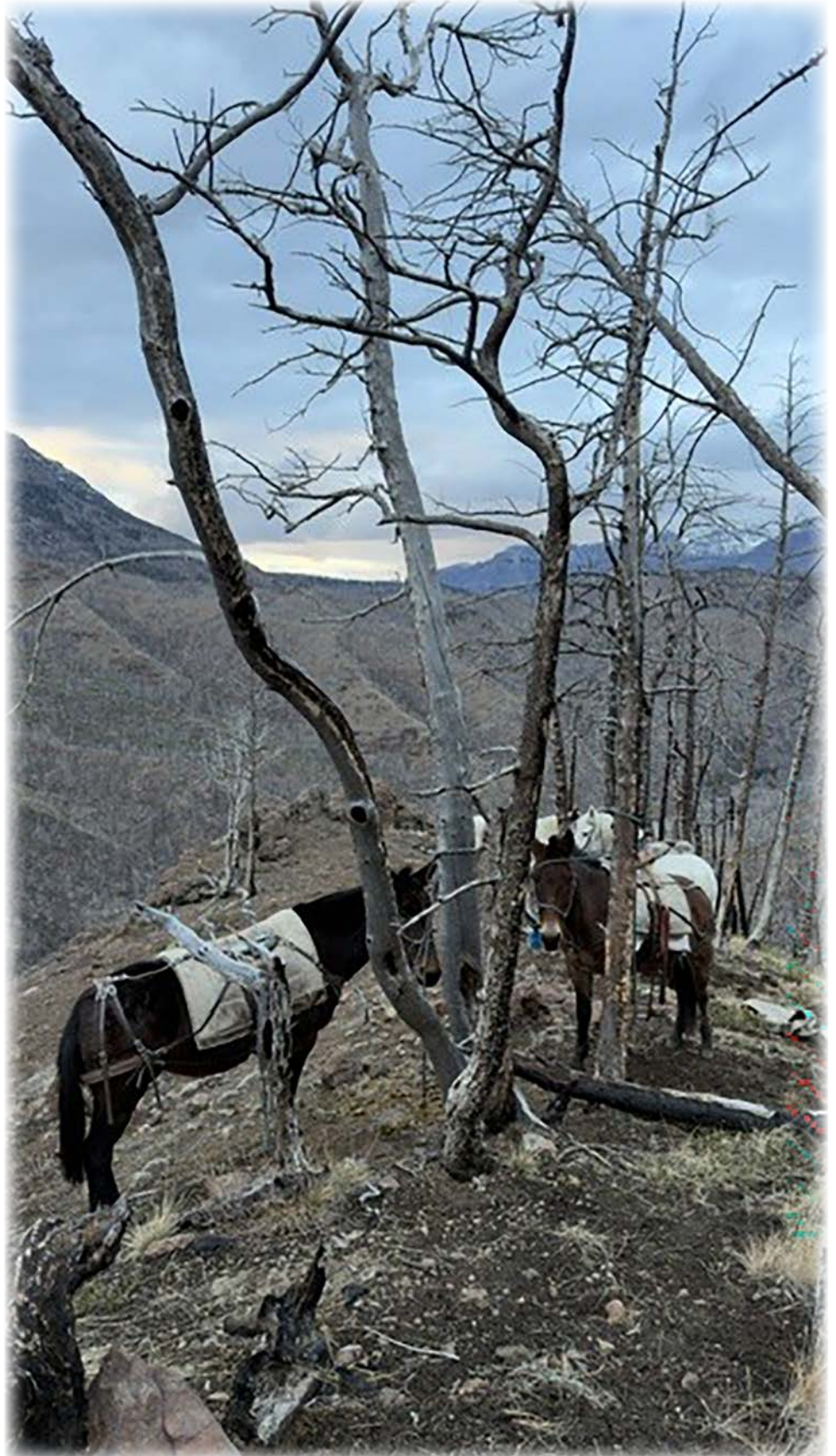
By: Tanner Tuggle

Dreams, we all have them and we all chase them. Some people though are just crazy enough to leave everything and move across the country to chase theirs. That, of course, is what I did over a year ago. I didn't know a single person in the state of Wyoming, but I moved here from West Virginia with the anticipation of feeding my new addiction of elk hunting.

Through my first season living out West, I was lucky enough to harvest a Wyoming archery bull and a Montana rifle bull. This only amplified my passion and I could not get my new hobby off my brain. Scouting, training, running trail cams, etc, it seemed as if I was spending all my free time getting ready for the 2025 season. With anticipation of having my first over the counter resident general tag, I was hoping to capitalize on this opportunity. Fortunately though, I would find out that I was about to become one of the luckiest individuals in the state of Wyoming.

In June of 2025, I was notified that I had won a Commissioners Tag through the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation. This meant that I could choose any unit in the state to hunt either antelope, deer, or elk. The species decision was easy for me, but choosing the unit was so difficult. After much thought, I decided that I wanted to go with an elk migration hunt. Not only would this give me the chance at a giant bull, but it would also give me the opportunity to help others during the early season.

September is the best time of the year to be afield. The elk





After much anticipation, November finally rolled around and it was my turn. For migration hunts, it really depends on one thing... Snow. Sadly, there was no snow and no migration happening at all. Fortunately, I was prepared for the worst as I had booked an outfitter. Normally I am a DIY guy, but with the hunt of a lifetime, I wanted to go with the best. Not only that, when hunting in the country around Cody, you really need horses. After much research, I chose Shoshone Lodge Outfitters to lead me on my quest. That ended up

are bugling and there is nothing more majestic. One of my friends from work informed me that he had a very good tag during this time and he was on bulls. Unfortunately, he had not been able to close the deal yet. With my main hunt being later in the year, I decided to join him. Luckily on our first morning together, his fortune changed and he was able to arrow a 380" giant. After this, I was able to use my time that I had planned on dedicating for my own hunting to go join a friend in Montana to help him get his first archery bull. None of this would have been possible without the generosity of Commissioner Haskell and the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation.

being one of the smartest decisions that I could have made.

With no migration, there were no bulls pushing through the area. Luckily I had a team of guides who worked extremely hard to find us a bull that was already in the unit. Midway through our hunt, one of the guides said that he found "The One". Anxiously awaiting to hear more, he notified

us that he had found a 6x7 that would score in the 360s. There was one catch though. This bull was in the nastiest spot possible in the whole unit. It would take a lot of work to even think about hunting him.

The following morning we set out prior to daybreak, knowing that we had a difficult journey ahead of us. This was going to be a couple hour trek up some of the steepest faces around. As someone who is a novice with horses, I had to learn to trust my horse quickly because we were not in easy terrain. Finally, we made it to the top. As we looked down into the canyon, there "he" was. The giant elk was feeding about 1,000 yards away. With some strategy, our only option was to circle around to a peak that would offer a 700 yard cross canyon shot.

We closed the distance but he was already bedded in some timber. With anticipation of



waiting all day and possibly even sleeping under the stars if we had to make a late shot, we patiently waited. Thankfully, it only took until 9:50 am for him to get back on his feet. I steadied the 7 mm PRC and let a bullet fly at that point. The bull was quartering and the shot was back, but still likely clipped a lung. Five seconds later, the second shot rang out and hit the bull right by the spine. I was able to put a couple more follow up shots and fortunately the bull expired shortly after.

The work was about to begin, because where the bull expired was over 1,200 feet down a canyon and up a rocky cliff face. One of the guides mentioned that this may be



wilderness hunt off horses in the great state of Wyoming and harvest the bull of a lifetime. There is literally nothing else that you could ask for in an elk hunt. I am so blessed to have won this tag and to have had the experience that I did! Even though so many of my dreams have been met, I look forward to experiencing all

Wyoming has to offer in the future... And maybe even draw a sheep tag one day!

A Note from Tanner, "Wyoming Game and Fish aged my bull at 11.5 so he was definitely an old one. There are sheep pictured too that we saw early in the hunt."

the worst spot that he has ever retrieved an elk in his ten year career. After much work though, we made it to the bull. On arrival, he ended up being just as big as we thought and will likely score in the 360's. After letting everything soak in and a short photo session, we processed the bull at the kill site. However, we knew that this was not the end of the adventure. The meat, head, and hide had to stay overnight in the backcountry because it would be impossible to get the pack mules there that day.

After surviving a close rock fall and hiking out of the vertical 1,200 foot canyon, we led the horses down the mountain so we could all get some rest. Given the difficulty of the retrieval and my novice horsemanship, I stayed back the following day and let the guides pave the way with new trails to retrieve the elk. Thankfully, they made it back by dark and only had to scare one grizzly off as they were coming back to their trucks.

Back to our dreams, this hunt really satisfied so many of mine. I was able to complete a remote





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We Got This!

By: Jordan Seitz

“WE GOT THIS”

**Jordan Seitz Encampment
K12 Teacher**

Update 17:

“We got this!” That is how we felt after placing our camera cluster along the creek in September. To recap, years were spent trying to find and document a prime creek crossing used by our local bighorns. In 2024, we felt like we’d finally done it... And then a tree fell in front of one camera, and a bear ate the other. To increase our odds leading into the winter of 2025-26, we placed two cameras on the creek from different angles, and a third further up the trail pointed at those sets.

I’m pretty excited about a new strategy we employed due to the lack of tree trunks where we needed them. One camera is in its original location, strapped to massive roots tipped over vertically, and the other two are on alders and a serviceberry that we wrapped and strapped together to make a “trunk.” If those work, it will be a game changer for placement options. The camera with the most anticipation is the one placed right on the creek bank facing downstream to catch perpendicular movement. The cool-shot potential is very high!

We took a couple more trips, which included some great sheep sightings and a day with Biologist Teal. We learned that our ram-to-ewe ratio is

high enough that Game and Fish might explore additional hunting opportunities in the future for younger age-class rams. She explained more about healthy herd dynamics and the data she wanted to collect. We needed to classify all bighorns into females, juveniles (lambs), yearling males, adult males (>3/4 curl), and adult males (<3/4 curl). This was a first for us because usually we focus on ewes, not horns.

With the mild winter we’ve had in the valley so far, we are excited to see what the spring brings for the sheep and for the creek crossing!





2025 Ram By: Steve Adamson

With twenty-one preference points, I drew a 2025 sheep tag for Area # 2 and was joined by my son Travis and longtime friend Don Owen on a DIY hunting adventure. We spent the first week of September camping on Trout Creek, and glassed several smaller rams above 9,000 feet, but found nothing worthy of punching a coveted tag on.

After resting the horses and restocking supplies, we headed back in on the fifteenth and encountered a group of eight rams bedded on a sagebrush-covered ridge below 8,000 feet. I was able to take the largest ram with a couple rounds of 165-grain Core-Lokt SPSs, from my Remington model 700 in 30-06 caliber at 238 yards.

It was an absolute thrill to hang my long-awaited tag on this ten year old ram that green scored 174 inches. At this writing, I continue to be amazed that the thrill of the hunt hasn't worn off and appreciative of those who shared in the adventure and helped make it happen.





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Bighorn Sheep Disease Management - Sacrificing the Few to Save the Many

By: Jessica Jennings and Daryl Lutz
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Lethal removal of free-ranging wildlife is a common management tool especially in regards to an overabundant population..... think hunting (Gortázar 2022). Lethal removal has also been used in a number of other situations, such as events of human/wildlife conflict, damage mitigation, and to address invasive species. In some instances, it can also be a tool used to manage infectious disease. Currently, in Wyoming, there are two primary methods of lethal removal used for managing disease in bighorn sheep; “test and remove” which is being evaluated in one herd, for its effectiveness at increasing lamb survival by decreasing *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (*M. ovi*) prevalence and departmental Chapter 56 removals, which are used to prevent introduction of disease by foraging or wandering bighorns.

Respiratory disease (pneumonia) and its effects on bighorn sheep populations is a primary management concern. Decades of research have identified *M. ovi*, a bacterium that damages the cells lining the respiratory tract, as a “trigger” that allows other bacteria to invade the lungs, causing pneumonia (Weyand 2018). To understand *M. ovi* infection dynamics, researchers have repeatedly tested free-ranging and captive bighorn ewes, from infected herds, and have found that some test positive for *M. ovi* intermittently and some test positive for *M. ovi* consistently (Weyand 2018). These long-term carriers can infect newborn lambs that have little immunity. Infected lambs spread *M. ovi* to other lambs

in nursery groups, usually resulting in pneumonia-related deaths before eight weeks of age. Poor to no lamb survival is common in *M. ovi* infected herds and is a pattern that can last for decades as we’ve seen in the Whiskey Mountain herd.

“Test and remove” is a disease management tool aimed at removing these known infectious animals or chronic carriers from a population in order to decrease or eliminate the pathogen. Recently, test and remove programs have been used in an attempt to mitigate *M. ovi* in bighorn sheep populations (Cassirer 2025; Garwood 2020; WAFWA 2023). Chronic carriers, those consistently testing positive, contribute to the bacteria remaining in circulation in these herds (Garwood, 2020). Currently no vaccines or antimicrobial strategies exist for *M. ovi* in free-ranging populations, so there are no effective treatments (Cassirer 2025). Research has shown that removing chronic carriers from a population can decrease the prevalence of *M. ovi* (Garwood, 2020). Certain criteria must be met for a test and remove program to be successful in the short and long term. Starting with an isolated population (no interaction with domestic sheep/goats or other wild sheep/goat populations), having the ability to detect most, if not all carriers,

and a commitment to several years of removal operations will increase the chance of success (WAFWA 2021). Long term effectiveness of these programs is still being evaluated.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department’s Chapter 56 regulation governs the process for lethal taking of wildlife when Department personnel determine that removal is necessary. A Chapter 56 removal may be authorized in situations where there is a threat to human life, health, or safety, when wildlife has sustained an injury, is physiologically distressed, or has potentially contracted a disease that is life threatening to that individual or the entire population. There may be several reasons why a Chapter 56 permit would be used for removal of bighorn

Nasal swab being collected for *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* surveillance as part of test and removal operations being conducted in the Whiskey Mountain herd (photo courtesy of WGFD).





Bighorn sheep Chapter 56 removal due to known, suspected, or likely contact with domestic sheep (photo courtesy of WGFD).

sheep, but most commonly it is used to minimize the potential for pathogen and disease transmission. Chapter 56 permits may be used in cases of animals located within a designated bighorn sheep herd unit that are exhibiting signs of sickness, wherein the animal is removed to protect other members of the herd and for a thorough health evaluation, i.e. necropsy. In instances where bighorn sheep are foraging or wandering outside of their designated herd units and there is known, suspected, or likely contact with domestic sheep or goats, animals are removed to protect bighorn sheep herds from the introduction of pathogens from the forager's return to their herd or immigration into another herd. Often, foraging bighorn sheep do not exhibit signs of sickness, because the time between exposure and when clinical signs become

apparent can be extensive. In captive animal experiments, where bighorn sheep have shared pens with infected domestic sheep, disease onset from *M. ovi* took 14-21 days (Besser 2014). Since disease status cannot be determined just by observing these foraging sheep, it is critical that they be removed before they can come into contact with bighorn sheep populations.

The three fundamental forms of wildlife disease management are the prevention of the introduction of pathogens and disease, control of an existing disease, or complete eradication of the disease (Wobeser 2002). *M. ovi*, or other pathogens, introduced into bighorn sheep herds can cause catastrophic die offs (Foreyt 1982) and once a herd is infected it can be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to remove that pathogen. Prevention of the spread of disease is the best option, where logistically possible, but can be difficult in wild populations. In populations struggling with chronic disease issues, a lethal removal strategy may become necessary to attempt to control or eradicate that disease. Both removal strategies involve long term commitments (e.g., time and resources), but utilizing them both, over time, may help contribute to decreasing disease prevalence in our bighorn sheep populations.

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70 Years Young to Five Years Old The Hart Family

Here are a couple of pictures from this last season. My dad Alden had his second license, his first was 30 years ago and unsuccessful due to medical. My older son went for the first trip and found a sheath, we were unable to find the rest. My younger son only got to hear the stories, but loved a head I found. This is only a paraphrase for the adventures and stories that accompany this amazing time in my life. -Zach Hart





Mr. Owens Enjoying the WY WSF Winter Meeting.



WY WSF Crew at Camo at the Capitol.

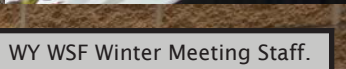
WY WSF EVENTS



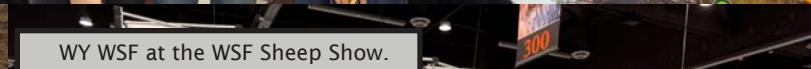
Tough Sheep Workout Competitor Dan Hinz!



Jessi Johnson (Wyoming Wildlife Federation), Brian Nesvik (Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), and Katie Cheesbrough (Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation).



WY WSF Winter Meeting Staff.



WY WSF at the WSF Sheep Show.



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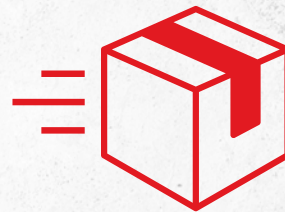
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Jamison and Jackson Owens. Just Like Dad (RHS & Board) Jimmy Owens.



LM Kalvin Eisenach. Archery Moose.

Member's Gallery



RHS Kurt Eisenach.



Cheesbrough Family After a Successful Christmas Tree Hunt.



LM Jeff Brock. North Fork, Near Cody, Wyoming.





Mike Porter.



Casper Banquet \$1 Raffle (Rifle) Winner Steve Lamb.



Patrick Mooney During His Winning Costa Rica Trip.



Sara Domek. Pronghorn. Dubois, Wyoming.



RHS Ray and Karen Lozier.

RHS Nick and Becky Roskowiak. First Antelope. LM Dennis Magnusson (Foreground).



Chance Butler.



RHS Brenton Scott. Kaibab, Arizona.



Kevin Schoepel.



Bighorn Sheep 2025 Harvest Report Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Table 1
Bighorn Sheep
Harvest Summary
Statewide
2025

	Valid Licenses	Active Hunters	Harvest				Hunter Days	Days/ Harvest	Hunter Success
			Ram	Ewe	Lamb	Total			
Resident	250	245	141	69	1	211	1,840	8.7	86.1%
Nonresident	35	35	23	8	0	31	193	6.2	88.6%
Total	285	280	164	77	1	242	2,033	8.4	86.4%

* License holders who did not respond to the survey are assumed to have hunted, but not harvested.

Table 5
Bighorn Sheep License Data
Summary Statewide
2025

	Valid Licenses	Number Surveyed	Responses*	Response Rate
Resident	250	250	238	95.2%
Nonresident	35	35	33	94.3%
Total	285	285	271	95.1%

* Responses include hunters who registered a harvested bighorn sheep or responded to a harvest survey.

Executive Summary:

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department registers harvested bighorn sheep and surveys bighorn sheep hunters. This information is used to calculate the number of animals harvested, hunter success, and hunter effort. This information helps Game and Fish manage bighorn sheep populations and plan next year's hunting seasons. The harvest statistics presented in this report were estimated based on 271 hunters who either registered a bighorn sheep or responded to a harvest survey. In the 2025 hunting season, 242 bighorn sheep were harvested in Wyoming.

Table 2
Bighorn Sheep
 Ten-Year Comparison of Statewide Harvest
 2016 - 2025

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Valid Licenses										
Resident	149	158	147	134	137	129	151	206	194	250
Nonresident	61	56	59	48	47	57	56	35	30	35
Total	210	214	206	182	184	186	207	241	224	285
Active Hunters										
Resident	147	157	146	134	133	128	148	197	194	245
Nonresident	61	55	59	48	44	56	54	35	30	35
Total	208	212	205	182	177	184	202	232	224	280
Total Harvest										
Resident	111	125	103	105	93	99	118	153	160	211
Nonresident	56	50	51	39	39	49	44	29	25	31
Total	167	175	154	144	132	148	162	182	185	242
Ram Harvest										
Resident	111	125	103	104	92	99	110	128	126	141
Nonresident	56	50	51	39	39	49	41	26	22	23
Total	167	175	154	143	131	148	151	154	148	164
Ewe Harvest										
Resident	0	0	0	1	1	0	8	25	34	69
Nonresident	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	8
Total	0	0	0	1	1	0	11	28	37	77
Lamb Harvest										
Resident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Nonresident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hunter Days										
Resident	1,537	1,497	1,349	1,328	1,257	1,428	1,325	1,841	1,722	1,840
Nonresident	384	336	410	246	232	292	320	177	208	193
Total	1,921	1,833	1,752	1,574	1,489	1,720	1,645	2,018	1,930	2,033
Days/Harvest										
Resident	13.8	12.0	13.1	12.6	13.5	14.4	11.2	12.0	10.8	8.7
Nonresident	7.1	6.7	8.0	6.3	5.9	6.0	7.3	6.1	8.3	6.2
Total	11.6	10.5	11.4	10.9	11.3	11.6	10.2	11.1	10.4	8.4
Hunter Success										
Resident	-	-	70.5%	78.4%	69.9%	77.3%	79.7%	77.7%	82.5%	86.1%
Nonresident	-	-	86.4%	81.2%	88.6%	87.5%	81.5%	82.9%	83.3%	88.6%
Total	82.2%	82.5%	75.1%	79.1%	74.6%	80.4%	80.2%	78.4%	82.6%	86.4%
Firearm Harvest										
Resident	-	-	100.0%	98.1%	95.7%	100.0%	96.6%	94.1%	96.9%	93.8%
Nonresident	-	-	98.0%	97.4%	100.0%	93.8%	97.7%	86.2%	96.0%	93.4%
Total	99.4%	96.0%	99.3%	97.9%	97.0%	98.0%	96.9%	92.9%	96.8%	96.8%
Archery Harvest										
Resident	-	-	0.0%	1.9%	4.3%	0.0%	3.4%	5.9%	3.1%	6.2%
Nonresident	-	-	2.0%	2.6%	0.0%	6.2%	2.3%	13.8%	4.0%	6.6%
Total	1.2%	4.0%	0.7%	2.1%	3.0%	2.0%	3.1%	7.1%	3.2%	3.2%

Table 3
Bighorn Sheep
Harvest Statistics
By Hunt Area
2025

Hunt Area	Type	Residency	Valid Licenses	Active Hunters	Harvest				Hunter Days	Days/ Harvest	Hunter Success (%)	Notes	
					Ram	Ewe	Lamb	Total					
1 Clark's Fork	Type 1	Resident	13	13	12	0	0	12	80	6.7	92.3	Exclds. 1 Carry-Out	
		Nonresident	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	-	0.0		
		Total	14	14	12	0	0	12	87	7.2	85.7		
2 Trout Peak	Type 1	Resident	21	21	18	0	0	18	232	12.9	85.7	Exclds. 1 Donor	
		Nonresident	7	7	7	0	0	7	38	5.4	100.0		Incls. 1 Donee, 3 Gov
		Total	28	28	25	0	0	25	270	10.8	89.3		
3 Wapati Ridge	Type 1	Resident	19	19	15	0	0	15	274	18.3	78.9	Incls. 1 Carry-In	
		Nonresident	3	3	3	0	0	3	10	3.3	100.0		Incls. 1 Supertag
		Total	22	22	18	0	0	18	284	15.8	81.8		
4 Yount's Peak	Type 1	Resident	18	17	15	0	0	15	136	9.1	88.2	Incls. 3 Carry-In & Exclds. 2 Carry-Out, 1 Refund	
		Nonresident	2	2	2	0	0	2	10	5	100.0		
		Total	20	19	17	0	0	17	146	8.6	89.5		
5 Franc's Peak	Type 1	Resident	32	31	24	0	0	24	236	9.8	77.4	Incls. 1 Donee, 2 Carry-In, 1 Trifecta & Exclds. 1 Donor, 2 Carry-Out	
		Nonresident	5	5	4	0	0	4	33	8.2	80.0		Incls. 1 Gov
		Total	37	36	28	0	0	28	269	9.6	77.8		
6 Targhee	Type 1	Resident	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	-	0.0		
		Total	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	-	0.0		
7 Jackson ^a	Type 1	Resident	9	9	7	1	0	8	138	17.2	88.9	Exclds. 2 Carry-Out	
		Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0		
	Type 6	Resident	45	43	1	36	1	38	118	3.1	88.4	Incls. 3 Donee & Exclds. 3 Donor	
		Nonresident	5	5	0	4	0	4	9	2.2	80.0		
		Total	60	58	9	41	1	51	267	5.2	87.9		
8 Sheep Mountain	Type 1	Resident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0.0	Exclds. 2 Carry-Out	
		Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0.0		
9 Dinwoody	Type 1	Resident	4	4	1	0	0	1	36	36.0	25.0		
		Nonresident	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	-	0.0		
		Total	5	5	1	0	0	1	43	43.0	20.0		
10 Jakey's Fork	Type 1	Resident	5	5	5	0	0	5	45	9.0	100.0		
		Total	5	5	5	0	0	5	45	9.0	100.0		
12 Porcupine	Type 1	Resident	3	3	3	0	0	3	13	4.3	100.0		
		Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2	100.0		
	Type 2	Resident	4	4	4	0	0	4	19	4.8	100.0		
		Total	8	8	8	0	0	8	34	4.2	100.0		

Table 3 (Continued)

Bighorn Sheep 2025 Harvest Statistics

Hunt Area	Type	Residency	Valid Licenses	Active Hunters	Harvest				Hunter Days	Days/Harvest	Hunter Success (%)	Notes
					Ram	Ewe	Lamb	Total				
17 Ferris-Seminole	Type 1	Resident	8	8	8	0	0	8	84	10.5	100.0	Incls. 1 Donee & Excls. 1 Donor, 1 Carry-Out Incls. 1 Gov, 1 Carry-In Gov
		Nonresident	2	2	2	0	0	2	4	2.0	100.0	
	Type 2	Resident	7	7	7	0	0	7	51	7.3	100.0	
		Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	5	5.0	100.0	
	Type 6	Resident	27	26	1	24	0	25	51	2.0	96.2	Excls. 1 Refund
		Nonresident	2	2	0	2	0	2	3	1.5	100.0	
	Type 7	Resident	9	9	0	6	0	6	53	8.8	66.7	
		Nonresident	1	1	0	1	0	1	4	4.0	100.0	
	Total		57	56	19	33	0	52	255	4.9	92.9	
18 Douglas Creek	Type 1	Resident	3	3	3	0	0	3	38	12.7	100.0	
		Total	3	3	3	0	0	3	38	12.7	100.0	
19 Laramie Peak	Type 1	Resident	10	10	9	0	0	9	122	13.6	90.0	Incls. 1 Carry-In
		Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	29	29.0	100.0	
		Total	11	11	10	0	0	10	151	15.1	90.9	
20 Kouba Caynon	Type 1	Resident	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0	
		Total	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0	
21 Encampment River	Type 1	Resident	1	1	1	0	0	1	58	58.0	100.0	
		Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	26	26.0	100.0	
		Total	2	2	2	0	0	2	84	42.0	100.0	
22 Dubois Badlands	Type 1	Resident	5	5	3	0	0	3	35	11.7	60.0	
		Total	5	5	3	0	0	3	35	11.7	60.0	
24 Big Piiney	Type 1	Resident	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0	
		Total	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0	
26 Bennett Mountain	Type 1	Resident	2	2	2	0	0	2	4	2.0	100.0	Incls. 1 Carry-In
		Resident	2	2	0	2	0	2	6	3.0	100.0	
	Type 6	Nonresident	1	1	0	1	0	1	4	4.0	100.0	
		Total	5	5	2	3	0	5	14	2.8	100.0	

^a A yearling ram was illegally taken in Hunt Area 7 with a Type 6 license; the associated license, harvest, and hunter days are counted as Type 6 here.

[†] License holders who did not respond to the survey are assumed to have hunted, but not harvested

Citation:

Wyoming Game and Fish Department and Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center. 2026. Bighorn sheep 2025 harvest report. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cheyenne, WY. Available online: <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/hunting-trapping/harvest-reports-surveys>.

Table 4
Bighorn Sheep
Harvest Statistics
By Herd Unit
2025

Herd Unit	Residency	Valid Licenses	Active Hunters	Harvest				Hunter Days	Days / Harvest	Hunter Success (%)
				Ram	Ewe	Lamb	Total			
106 Targhee	Resident	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	-	0.0
	Total	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	-	0.0
107 Jackson	Resident	54	52	8	37	1	46	256	5.6	88.5
	Nonresident	6	6	1	4	0	5	11	2.2	83.3
	Total	60	58	9	41	1	51	267	5.2	87.9
121 Darby Mountain	Resident	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100
	Total	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100
200 Absaroka	Resident	108	106	87	0	0	87	993	11.4	82.1
	Nonresident	18	18	16	0	0	16	98	6.1	88.9
	Total	126	124	103	0	0	103	1091	10.6	83.1
212 Devil's Canyon	Resident	7	7	7	0	0	7	32	4.6	100.0
	Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0
	Total	8	8	8	0	0	8	34	4.2	100.0
516 Douglas Creek	Resident	3	3	3	0	0	3	38	12.7	100.0
	Total	3	3	3	0	0	3	38	12.7	100.0
517 Laramie Peak	Resident	10	10	9	0	0	9	122	13.6	90.0
	Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	29	29.0	100.0
	Total	11	11	10	0	0	10	151	15.1	90.9
519 Encampment	Resident	1	1	1	0	0	1	58	58.0	100.0
	Nonresident	1	1	1	0	0	1	26	26.0	100.0
	Total	2	2	2	0	0	2	84	42.0	100.0
609 Whiskey Mountain	Resident	9	9	6	0	0	6	81	13.5	66.7
	Nonresident	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	-	0.0
	Total	10	10	6	0	0	6	88	14.7	60.0
615 Ferris-Seminole	Resident	55	54	18	32	0	50	249	5.0	92.6
	Nonresident	7	7	3	4	0	7	20	2.9	100.0
	Total	62	61	21	36	0	57	269	4.7	93.4
720 Kouba Canyon	Resident	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0
	Total	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2.0	100.0

*License holders who did not respond to the survey are assumed to have hunted, but not harvested

Correspondence:

For questions about hunting in Wyoming, call one of Wyoming Game and Fish Department's Regional Offices (contact info available online at <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/regional-information>), or contact our statewide Customer Service staff at wgfd-contact@wyo.gov or (307) 777-4600.

Acknowledgments:

This report was completed through a partnership with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center at the University of Wyoming. We thank Wyoming Game and Fish Department personnel for collecting harvest information at hunter check stations. As always, we are indebted to the many sportspersons who completed a survey questionnaire and shared valuable information about their hunting experience.



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Tom Thorne/ Beth Williams WHMA Wildlife Friendly Fence Conversion

John Henningsen

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Introduction:

The Thorne/Williams WHMA is rough terrain comprised of sagebrush shrublands and prairie grasslands. The entire WHMA is within designated mule deer crucial range and is almost entirely designated bighorn sheep crucial range. The area is important as winter range for elk, mule deer, and bighorn sheep. Most of the existing boundary fence had been 48" woven wire plus 3-4 strands of barbed wire, making for an especially impermeable 60" high barrier. At the outset of this project, we aimed to convert about 7 miles of boundary fence to a wildlife friendly standard. Those would be the last 7 miles of impermeable 5-foot high fencing on and around the Thorne/Williams WHMA. There are about 10.5 miles of fence around the entire boundary of the WHMA. A few miles of fence conversions have already occurred over the preceding decade, but the 2023-2025 effort would be the most ambitious in terms of scope and difficulty of terrain....

Work Summary:

...The rugged terrain and



WGFD staff and volunteers with The Wildlife Society Fellowship (University of Wyoming undergraduate students) on a workday in September 2024- removing old woven wire fence and replacing it with four strands.

difficult access made every portion of this fence a challenging endeavor. We were able to use a skidsteer and wire winder for less than one mile of fence because of the difficulty in getting a full-size skidsteer close to the fence. Thus, almost all of the old fence was rolled up by hand and carried out to a limited number of access locations that could then be reached by UTV or pickup. In a very limited number of spots, the contractor was able to use a compact track loader with an

auger for digging new post holes.

We were able to save some costs by re-using some of the existing line posts- pressure

treated wood posts. All braces were built new, and many additional braces were added. Newly constructed fence is four strands: bottom strand of smooth wire at 18" off the ground, then three strands of barbed, with the top strand at 40" high. Four wire gates were added to the north boundary that can be left open when cattle are not present. In two sections of about 100 yards each, we used adjustable fence clips so that the top wire can be lowered and bottom strand raised when cattle aren't present.

We were fortunate to be treated to unseasonably warm (albeit windy) weather in November-December of 2025. The lack of snow allowed WGFD staff and the fencing contractor to complete construction on the new fence just before the calendar turned to 2026...

Benefits to Wildlife:

Wildlife friendly fence allows ungulates and all other wildlife to jump over and crawl under, reducing harm to wildlife while also reducing fence maintenance costs.

New wires on re-used posts, Thorne/Williams WHMA.



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Bighorn Sheep Hunt 2019

By: Flint Smith

Drawing a sheep tag is a dream of every hunter. That's exactly what happened to me in the 2019 lottery draw on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.

Getting ready throughout the summer months, preparing gear, and of course trying to get in sheep shape doesn't always work out in your favor. Injuries can happen at any time. That's what happened to me when my knee started giving out, but I wasn't going to let it slow me down.

The day had arrived for my first planned trip. Of course, things never work out as planned, so I was going in solo, which I do not recommend, but nothing was stopping me from getting to the sheep country. I decided to hit an area where I had seen rams in the past. After the hike in, I immediately started seeing sheep. There was a band of four rams 800 yards away, and two of them looked to be borderline shooters. I sat and studied the rams trying to decide which one was bigger, and if either was a complete shooter. I decided to hold off

and took pictures and video with my Vortex Razor 85mm spotting scope and Phone Skope attachment. If it wasn't for this combination of gear, I would not have the quality of footage to completely judge these rams. Later that night I sent the pictures to a good friend of mine. He agreed, two very nice rams. Either ram would be a shooter. The ram I chose to take the next day would be the darker ram of the two. The next morning found me back in the steep country I last saw the rams in. I hiked quite a while before I finally made contact with them. And when I did, it all happened fast. I peeked over the rim and saw the rams slowly walking to my left, slightly away from me. I quickly backed out of sight and moved to where I could get a clear shot. I peeked back over the rim at my new position and shouldered my .270 Winchester on the first ram. It was the dark ram looking straight at me at 75 yards. At that distance I decided to take one more look at the other rams to make certain this was the ram I wanted to take. I looked the

other rams over quickly. I decided the dark ram was definitely the shooter. When I got back on the dark ram, I settled my crosshairs on his shoulder getting ready to squeeze the trigger. Then the ram stepped over the saddle edge, disappearing. My heart dropped! I had this ram dead to rights

but had to make d*mn sure he was the one, and it cost me. I hiked and spent hours looking for the rams. I never turned them up. While glassing a big bowl, I did turn up two new rams. They were only around 5 1/2 years old, young rams! Just as I was getting footage of these two. A bad storm blew in out of nowhere and completely ended my hunt. Giving me plenty of time to think about what happened on this first trip. But some things happen for a reason.

It's been two weeks since my last trip. This second trip starts much the same, a solo hunt. As if the odds weren't stacked against me enough already, with plenty of time to think about what to do on this second hunt. I headed back up to the same area to look for the dark ram. After wading through numerous bugling bull elk, I got to my glassing point. I immediately saw tracks in the snow on the steep cliffs. The snow had been there a while so I wasn't sure how fresh the tracks actually were being so far away. I glassed a little longer, then continued hiking. I finally got to where the dark ram stepped over the edge on the last hunt. All I found was more glassing and bad memories. I hiked a little longer, turning up nothing. Only herds of elk on distant ridges. I made a plan to circle around lower and hunt back towards my original glassing point. I needed to get a different angle underneath the cliffs where I couldn't completely see the first time. I set up to glass overlooking a big bowl surrounded with steep cliffs. I glassed for a minute and suddenly I picked up two rams in my binoculars. Very excited, I set up my spotter. The ram on the left I could tell was not a shooter. I could only see part of the head on the



second ram. I had to move to my left to get a full look at him. When I focused the spotting scope on the ram, I thought I was seeing things. I could see the heavily broomed tips break the bridge of his nose. I could not believe what I was looking at. In disbelief I thought to myself, what is a ram like this doing in Wyoming? I've never seen anything like it. I then quickly set up the Phone Skope and started taking pictures and video. Sitting there making a plan, I believed the best way to get on this unbelievable ram was to go at him from straight above. Everything about this stalk was a huge gamble. If I go at him from above, I have a clear shot, if he decides to go left or to the right side. I started the stalk and the cliffs were much steeper than they looked. Creeping down the cliffs with rifle and shooting sticks in hand was much harder than anticipated. With the melting snow turning to slick mud in a few spots and stepping on small rocks, it was like walking on marbles. This stalk was ridiculous to say the least, almost impossible. That's why I believe this ram lived so long. He was in one hellhole of a spot. I continued down steep cliffs. I suddenly slipped and fell, sliding off a six foot ledge, banging up my right knee. After catching myself, I looked left and right for the rams. I thought they would spook for sure after that. At this point, I was very close to the rams. I gathered myself and started glassing. Below me were a few big boulders and slightly to the right of them, there was an opening in the rocks. In the bottom of that opening, I saw the smaller ram looking straight up at me, still bedded. I slowly slid my rifle off my shoulder and brought the scope to my eye. The small ram then stood up. I still could not see the big ram. Then the small ram slowly walked to my left out of sight. I thought, okay here we go,

the big ram is going to step into this opening and it's all over. The big ram bolted past the opening and jumped off the cliffs, running straight below me, where it was the only place I didn't have a clear shot. I didn't think in a million years these rams would do what they did and run to open ground through the middle of the bowl. I knew at this point I would have to make a running shot. I moved to my left to where I could see the rams and set up the shooting sticks. There was a third ram with them I couldn't see originally. I quickly picked out the big ram and the first shot was going straight away, a complete miss. The ram was getting further away and started running to the left. I took careful aim and led the ram considerably. I fired and could hear the bullet hit. The ram slowed down and bedded up under a small boulder. I was relieved that I hit the ram but was unsure I would get to finish him at this point. I had more cliffs to get down off of and a long hike down to where he was at, and I only had a few hours of light in grizzly



country. My decision was to go after the ram. I got about half way to the ram and I could see him move down into a large crevice. I figured once he was in there, he would bed up long enough to where I could get to him and get a finishing shot. When I finally got to the spot he went in, I found him lying in the bottom. I then shouldered my rifle and took aim and finished the ram. At that moment, I can't tell you how relieved I was. I made my way to the ram and could not believe what I had just accomplished. I walked up and put my hand on his horn in disbelief. This is the most beautiful Wyoming bighorn I have ever seen dead or alive. A ram of many lifetimes! Later I found out many hunters had been after this ram for a few years and he was the most photographed ram on the winter range near Dubois, Wyoming. Very special!





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Wild Game Recipes

WILD GAME MUSHROOM SURPREESE!

Submitted By: Jeffrey Frost

Ingredients

- One Pound (or More) of Game Meat
- Jasmine rice
- 1/2 Onion
- 1 Small Shallot
- 2 Cloves of Garlic
- 1 Medium Zucchini or a Handful of Asparagus
- Large Package of Portabella Mushrooms (This Should Be 3/4 of Vegetable Preparation)
- Olive Oil or Italian Dressing
- Butter
- Boursin Cheese
- Seasonings (Such as Ground Pepper or Lawry's Garlic Salt)

Directions

1. Cook rice and set aside
2. Cut meat into small chunks or slices and add seasoning. Heat up Olive Oil/ Italian Dressing along with a dash of butter. Saute the meat. Do not overcook! Set aside in a bowl.
3. Heat up more Olive Oil or Italian Dressing and butter. Add in and cook diced garlic, then add diced onion and shallot, and cook until tender. Add chopped zucchini (or asparagus) and continue to stir fry. Once these appear cooked, add sliced mushrooms and continue to stir fry. Season to taste. Finally add a heaping spoonful of the Boursin Cheese. Continue to stir fry contents until cheese is fully melted. Stir in meat and transfer this all to a large bowl.
4. Ladle your creation on top of a bed of rice and enjoy!

Pizza-Style Halibut

Submitted By: Jo Butler

Ingredients

- 2 Pounds Halibut Steaks, Fresh or Frozen
- Salt and Pepper
- 1 (8 Oz.) Can Tomato Sauce
- 1/4 Teaspoon Garlic Salt
- 1/4 Teaspoon Oregano
- 1/4 Teaspoon Sweet Basil
- 1 (2 Oz.) Can Button Mushrooms, Drained
- 2 Tablespoons Green Onions, Sliced
- 1/2 Cup Mozzarella Cheese, Grated
- 2 Tablespoons Parmesan Cheese, Grated
- Fresh Lemon Slices and Fresh Parsley for Garnish

Directions

1. Thaw frozen halibut in the refrigerator. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and arrange in an oiled baking dish. Combine tomato sauce with seasonings. Spoon the sauce over the halibut. Top with the mushrooms and green onions. Combine cheeses. Sprinkle over the halibut. Bake in a 400-degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the fish flakes with a fork. Garnish with lemon slices and parsley.
2. Serve with buttered noodles or spaghetti pasta and a colorful tossed salad.

Submit your favorite wild game recipe for inclusion in the next RamPage.

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Photo: Amy Anderson
307 Aviation and Bighorn Sheep Captures