SOCIETY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIGHORN SHEEP

The Sheepherder

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JULY - AUGUST 1975

BIGHORNS RETURN TO HELLS CANYON

Information for this article and the pictures are by courtesy of Milt Williams, Editor of the Idaho Wildlife Review, the publication of the Idaho Fish and Game Department. Repotts are by Gary Davidson, Royce Williams and Paul Hanna of the IDFG.

Early this year twelve sheep were relocated from the Panther Creek Drainage near Salmon to a wild portion of Hells Canyon downstream from the Hells Canyon Dam.

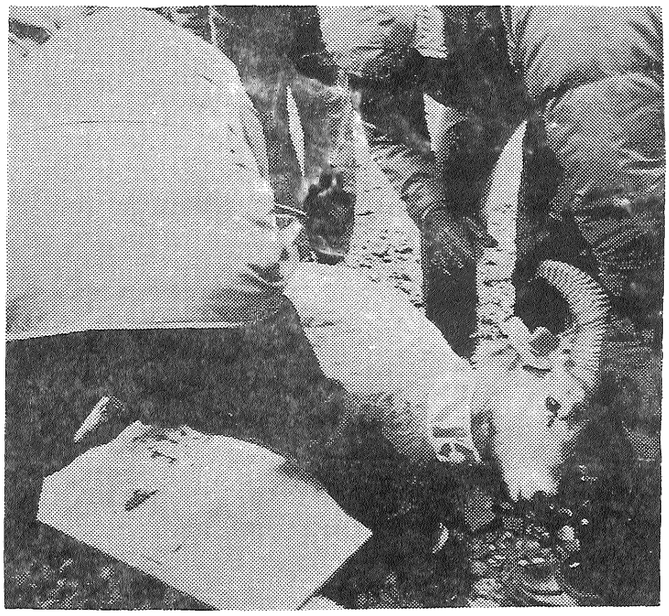
This project has been on the 'drawing boar for the past ten years, and in the actual planning process between the DFG and the US Forest Service for the past two years. There were many questions concerning the area that had to be answered before plans could be finalized. Would the vegetation of the area support bighorn sheep? Would the new herd be protected? And, how could it be done with the least strain on these wild animals?

Though in the trap, the sheep are not yet in hand.

During the study of the proposed release site archeologists found in a midden of Indians who had inhabited the area, bones of bighorn sheep, indicating early Indians in the canyon were heavily dependent on bighorns for food.

It is believed that the wild sheep disappeared from the Hells Canyon area due to early day subsistence hunting to provide meat for mining camps and settlers. Another more important cause was later competition for forage from domestic sheep, which also apparantly brought in diseases to which bighorns were susceptible.

The area for release was judged satisfactory and a trapping site located on the winter range near Panther Creek. The trap had been erected and remained open with alfalfa hay being used to lure the sheep into the enclosure .

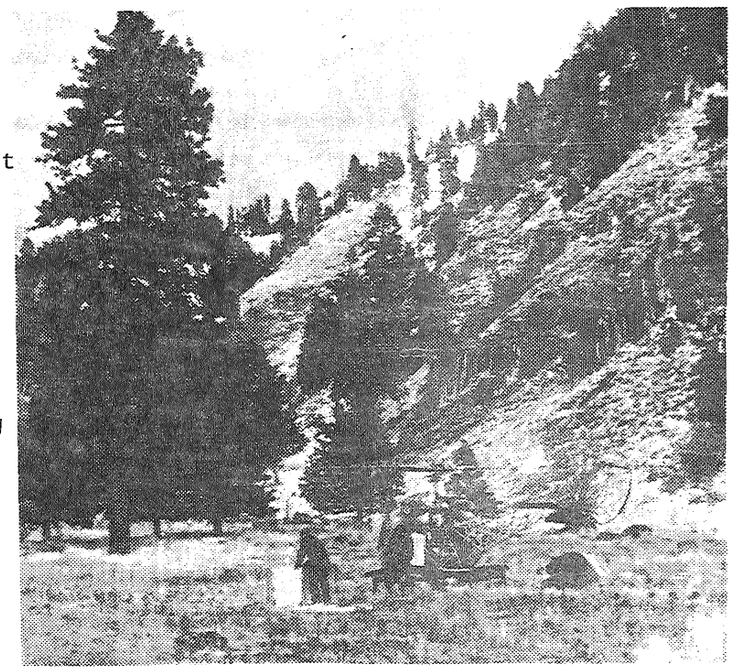


Ram being readied for transportation. Blood samples were taken; examination for parasites; and radio collar installed, while hogtied.

On the appointed day for trying to capture the sheep was cold. The temperature registered -17 degrees at the trapping site. The biologist woited in a tree and glassed the trap. A small herd of sheep moved toward the circular, mesh trap. For two months the trap had remained open and baited with alfalfa hay in the hope that the sheep would become accustomed to the trap. Everything was ready The biologist waited in the tree on the first morning. Several sheep moved into the trap but no rams. The trap was then left open until the next morning when sheep came off the hill just after sunrise and moved into the trap. This time a healthy half-curl ram was in the trap. One three-quarter curl ram moved near the trap, but he was suspicious and didn't enter. The biologist waited until nine ewes, two lambs and the half-curl ram were in the trap. He then pushed the button to set off the blasting caps that held the trap door.

What happened next can best be described as bighorns behaving like a pan full of popcorn. The animals leaped in every direction hitting the mesh sides of the trap with such force that some quick reinforcements had to be made. For a time the biologists thought the trap wasn't going to hold. With some frantic rope work at weak spots, the trap held and the animals were drugged, wrestled to the ground and tied.

Then began the trip of more than 700 miles to the release site. Senior Biologist Walt Bodie and Dean Jackson of the Bureau of Engineering, would keep the sheep moving in a covered truck for more than 30 hours. During the transplant the three men went more than 55 hours without sleep. Each sheep was lashed to a tobaggon for the slide down the snowy hillside to the road, loaded on the truck and driven south through Boise, north to Cambridge, then west to Hells Canyon Dam. At the dam each sheep was again hogtied and placed in wooden crate. Two sheep at a time were lashed to the luggage rack on each side of a helicopter for the final leg of the trip.



Helicopter pilot assists release crew in unloading sheep crates and loading the empties for return. Release area was a sloping swale in a side drainage in the canyon wall directly below the Seven Devils mountains.

Each sheep was tagged and radios were attached to the necks of the ram and to two ewes. Beeps sent out by these radios will enable Biologist Paul Hanna and Game Manager Chuck Jensen to monitor movements of the sheep. The sheep stayed together until Mid-April. After that, they separated intermittently and moved around more.
There are sheep on the Oregon side of the Snake River. The reintroduction of the California Bighorn sheep into Oregon has been reported on previously in THE SHEEPHERDER.

During the time the sheep were under sedation laboratory specimens were taken in an effort to determine parasitism. None were found. However, the examination was rather cursory and so no real determination was obtained.

The first sheep released was this ewe.

It is presently known that only one sheep, a ewe, has died of this small flock, originally twelve. In late March Paul Hanna was able to locate nine of the remaining(?) 11 members of the transplant. The ewe that succumbed apparantlycould not overcome the strain of the long trek from the capture site to the release point in Hells Canyon below the dam.

Reports show that the herd is adapting well to their new surroundings. Temperatures are mild and the bunch grass by Mid March had already put on about three inches of new growth.

If this new herd takes hold, and indications are that it will, as all reports are favorable, then, it will mark the end of the absence of bighorns from these sheer cliffs with grassy patches of soil that make up North America's deepest gorge.

Project leader, Bill Hickey checks the radio signals fo the sheep wearing the collars.

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(Extracted from a fishing and hunting guide book, circa 1875, and reprinted in FLY DOPE, a publication of Fly Fishermen for Conservation, Inc.)

FRESNO COUNTY Reached by the Visalia Division of the Central Pacific Railroad. Bear, deer, antelope, quail, ducks, geese, swans, and cranes. All within easy reach of this railroad the sportsman will find plenty of ducks and geese. Board, $1.50 to $2.50 a week. For hu nting in the mountains, a guide is needed; cost, $15.00 a month and found. Teams, horses, wagon, around $2.50 a week. Good fishing for trout, salmon trout (sic) and perch in the Fresno, San Joaquin and Kings Rivers.

PLEASE LET ME WIPE THE EGG OFF MY FACE

On the front page of the May - June issue of THE SHEEPHERDER, the editor made a very large 'Class AA' boner. This blunder was purely unintentional. I did not realize that there are at least three conservation associations in southern California that have the word "SAFARI" in their name. I did give credit to the wrong organization for the purchase of the HORIZONTAL WELL DRILLING MACHINE. I have learned of my error from three different sources; Bob Montgomery of the Department of Fish and Game;from Basil Bradbury, President of the Southern California Safari Club; and from Dr. Wilmer Hansen, Secretary-Treasurer of the Shikar-Safari Club International.
I am truly grateful that these gentlemen did take the time to write to me and to point out my error.

The organization which did purchase the Horizontal Well Drilling Machine and which did deed this $7,928.80 piece of equipment to the California Department of Fish and Game was the SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SAFARI CLUB.

I do hope that the Southern California Safari Club will accept my sincere apologies

Lew Carpenter, editor.

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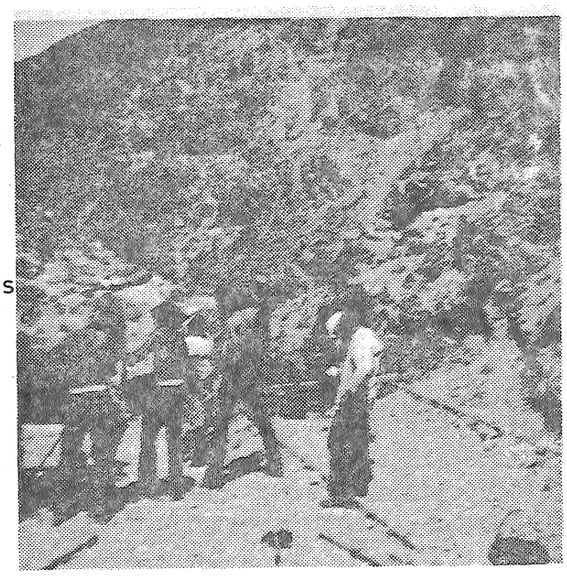
ANOTHER CHANCE FOR THE BIGHORN IN THE LAST CHANCE MOUNTAINS

by Bud Wiedeman

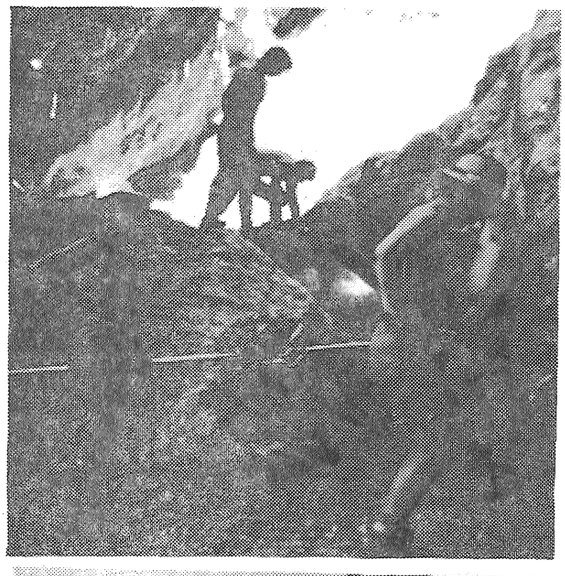


The Last Chance Mts. lie to the north of Death Valley National Monument in Inyo County and due east of the Eureka San Dunes.

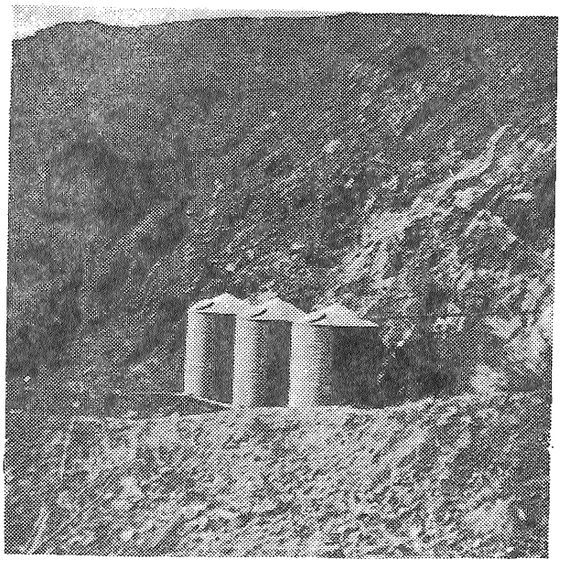
On May 7th all the material and equipment needed for the project, such as cement mixers, generators, tools, picks and shovels, re-bar, buckets, 5 drums of water, cement, drinking water for the crew, 3 - 1500 gallon steel tanks, and aren't we getting fancy--an electric pipe threader, the necessary pipe and fittings and an old ice box without a door, were all air lifted into the project site by helicopter.

During the afternoon and until late in the night of the 9th the 27 volunteers arrived at the campsite, which had been located at the sand dunes.

Early on the 10th of May the three Fish and Game 4-wheeel drive trucks and 2 of the volunteers began the shuttle of personnel the 4 miles around the sand dunes and on to the alluvial fan leading to the canyon where the project site was located. From this point it was a 1½ to 2 miles hike up the fan and canyon to the project site.



The work day began at 9;15 a.m. with the moving of water drums, cement and pipe up to the site chosen for the dam. Holes were drilled in the bedrock to hold the re-bars. The dam when completed was 5 feet wide at the base and 6 feet thick. The dam was 5 feet ten inches high at the crest and 10 feet between the canyon walls. That portion of the canyon chosen for the project is very narrow with walls nearly 100 feet high. Those who worked on the dam did not get out of the shade all day long. A tank platform was constructed 8 feet wide and 20 feet long, with a 5 inch topping of concrete. It was necessary to make a 3 foot rock fill at the lower end and a one foot excavation at the upper end. The tanks were put in place onthe platform and joined together with 2 inch pipe. Approximately 130 feet of 2 inch pipe was needed to join the tanks to the pick-up pipe in the dam. The old icechest which was utilized for the drinker was set in rocks about 40 feet below the tanks. It was cemented in placeand a rock wall about 1½ feet thick constructed around it.. The float and valve were put in position well down in the upper end of the chest; and adjusted for use. Kim Kirkpatrick climbed up the side of the hill and returned with a nice flat rock just right to cover the float and valve, to hide them from view, and also to prevent them from bing damaged. Asloping rock was placed in one corner of the drinker to enable small animals and birds to have an escape ramp.



By 4:15 p.m. the project was completed; the area had been cleaned-up and everything made ready to be air-lifted out on Monday morning. The project was completed in seven hours of elapsed time. "in my book

this was very good." All the volunteers had to drive at least 330 miles to get to the project. Some of them had very little sleep the night before the workday.

Those who worked on the Last Chance Project were:

John Massie, Wildlife Habitat Supervisor, Mike Bird, Les Coombes, and Banky Curtis of the Department of Fish and Game; Larry Mangan of the BLM's office in Bishop; Bud wiedeman, Mike Fusano and Kim Kirkpatrick of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep; Bob Juergens, Southern Council of Conservation Clubs; Chuck Kerr, George Kerr, Gene Kessinger, Terry Rubish, of the Panorama Sportsmen's Club; Matt Lowery, John Lowery, Carol Lowery, Scott Annond, Jeffery Hain, John Christian, Bob Garcia, Eddie Avedikian, of the Explorer Post 621X; Terry Zink, Pat Connolly, Bill Pabst,Bill Baierski, Keith Bouldin, Ted Schnur, of the Pierce College; Terry Grimm of the Donald Douglas Sportsmen's Club; Chuck West, of the Western Conservation Club; Bob Campbell of the Sierra Club; Jeffery Biging, Un-attached; Ronald Amate, BSA - Troop 764 of Marina Del Rey.

The Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep extends their deepest appreciation to all of these volunteers who made the long trip to the Last Chance Mountains and who gave so freely of their time on this Mother's Day weekend, to complete this project. They are a very dedicated group of Conservationists.

WE THANK ALL OF YOU. ---Bud.

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SHEEP CANYON WILDERNESS

Senate Bill - S-74 introduced into the Congress by senators Cranston and Tunney is now before the Sub- Committee on Environment and Land use of the Interior and Insular Committee. This bill was introduce by Cranston and Tunney at the request of Doctor Lutz and the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep. The porposed Wilderness contains some 63,000 acres of prime sheep habitat in the San Bernardino National Forest near Mt. Baldy, which has been the scene of considerable controversy over the last 5 or 6 years. Ski-lifts and other ski facilities have been proposed on Mt. Baldy. The U.S. Forest Service has in turn proposed that the W ilderness Proposal area be trimmed to about 31,000 acres. This smaller area is unacceptable. Alarge part of the sheep habitat is outside of the Forest Service proposed area. Further debate on this issue is presently held-up due to the lack of the Mineral Resource Inventory of the area. The Wilderness Act of 1964 requires that every proposed Wilderness area have such a mineral survey prior to decision concerning such classification. This requirement holds until 1985. These Mineral Surveys are presently being conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey teams, and they are still far behind their time schedule in making these surveys.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

LABOR DAY WEEKEND_____IN DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL MONUMENT---Please refer to a special article on this one.

September 27, 1975 WATERHOLE PROJECT-----Chemehuevi Mts. of Eastern San Berardino County. The DFG--John Massie, Wildlife Habitat Supervisor may contact previous participants. If interested, Write to Massie, 350 Golden hore, Long Beach, Calif. 90802 or phone his office at (213) 435 - 7741; or phone Dr. Lutz--address and phone on page one.

November 8, 1975 Water Project in the Clark Mts. of eastern San Bernardino County. More about this in the next issue.

March 1976 in the Kelso Peak area; May 1976 Mopah Mts.

Ocotber 4, 1975--Annual Society dinner in Southern Calif. Special article on this one.

Death Vlley National Monument--Annual Waterhole Sheep Count-- LABOR DAY WEEKEND------ AUGUST 30 - 31 and September 1.

If you can go please either write to Peter G. Sanchez, Natural Resource Specialist, Death Valley Natonal Monument, Death Valley, California . 92328 or telephone (714) 786-2331. In either case tell Pete how many will be in your partyand what kind of vehicle you will bring to the Monument. The type of vehicle may determine your assignment. Husband and wife teams have been very successful.

Like last year, plans w ill call for volunteers to assemble in the Visitor Center at Furnace Creek on August 29th. For briefing and for specific assignments to waterhole(s). After the count is completed it is hoped that all participants will return to the headquarters to check out of the Monument and to make their reports in person. Some areas, of course will be at a considerable distance from the headquarters and therefore this type of checkout will not be convenient--this will be a flexible situation.

There will, again be sites which will require experienced backpackers to cover in some of the remote areas of the Monument. If, you meet this requirement let Pete know this. Some of the areas to be covered are in or near the floor of the Valley. Here the temperatures can be expected to be a bit over 100 degrees.
The areas above the Valley floor can be expected to be a bit under the 100 degrees mark. As you are well aware, in order to have a successful waterhole count the temperature MUST be on the hot side and dry.
PLEASE WRITE TO PETE SANCHEZ PRIOR TO AUGUST 20. He will also need some lead time for scheduling participants.

MONUMENT personnel will write to each volunteerand send you a full set of particulars

WHAT YOU NEED TO TAKE WITH YOU TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL COUNT

WATER - is the primary need. Have enough for more than the three days spent on the count site---figure a minimum of 2 gallons per person per each day. You will drink at least one gallon of water daily. You will need some also for washing and bathing, cooking etc.,
2. You will need shade during the count. If Nature has not provided shade, then you must create some such as a tarp, together with what ever needed poles ropes for guying and stakes---usually rocks will suffice instead of stakes;
3. Have a cot to sleep on in camp so you will be off the ground;
4. a light sleeping bag--nights frequently do get cool--largely dependent on the altitude of your camp;
5. Reading material for use in your blind---otherwise you may go to sleep and miss the sight of watering wildlife;
6. Sunscreen ointment--and use it. You can get burned by the ultra-violet rays even while in complete shade;
7. First Aid kit --including a snake kit. Snakes like all other desert wildlife do look for shade in the desert;
8. Take no chances of any nature--walk the safe way--do not take short-cuts--they are frequent causes of accidents;
9. Have a good companion--- the days are long;
10. You need good optics-- a 20 power spotting scope should be in the blind, also a good pair of field glasses for each participant;
11. You will want a good camera and film--keep them in the shade and as cool as possible, Take your telephoto lenses -use a tripod.....Your editor will appreciate photos--black and white, or color, or slides, or negatives. I will return any which you wish returned;
12. Your watch station should be 100 to 200 yards from the waterhole, if possible. In some places, depending on terrain even 50 yards is ample provided you keep quiet and have a good screen between you and the waterhole;
13. When you leave--take all of your debris with you--leave no evidence of your having been in the area, except your footprints made while going and coming
14. A Husband and Wife team is said to be one of the best possible combinations.

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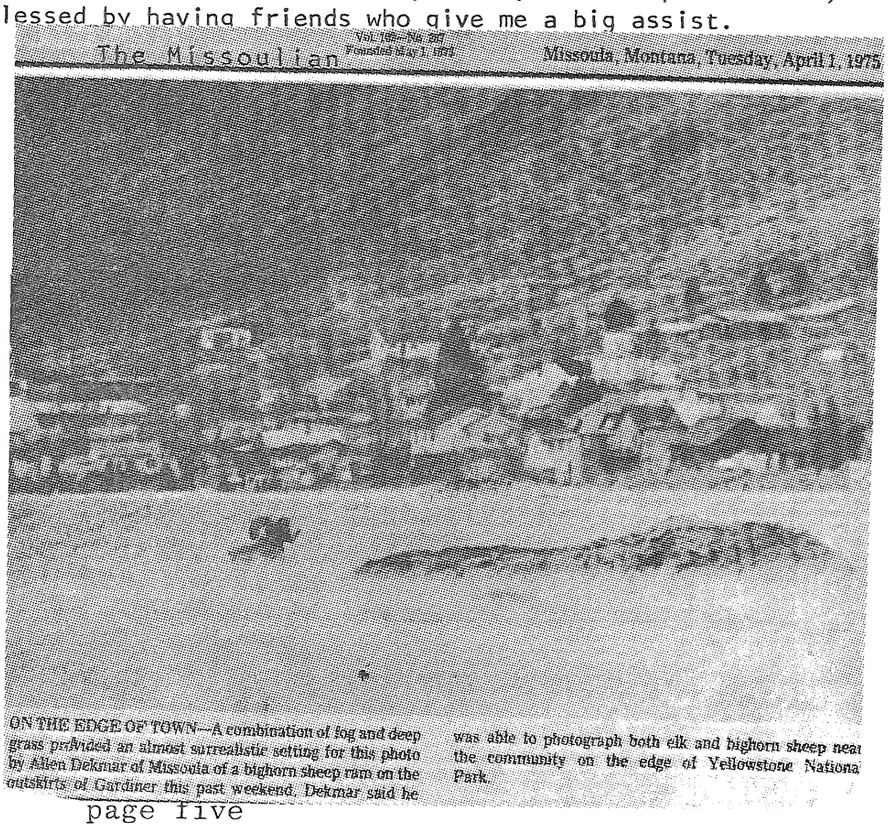
The sketch on the left which was sent to the editor by Bill Phifer, a past Editor of THE SHEEPHERDER depicts the difficulties experienced by wildlife photographers in trying to get good pictures of our wildlife, especially our sheep. HOWEVER, I am particularly blessed by having friends who give me a big assist.

Photo at the right was sent to me by Ed Schneegas --U.S. Forest Service. Ed first got interested in the bighorn sheep while serving in the Inyo and Sequoia National Forests of California. He works in the U.S.F.S. in Missoula, Montana.



The Missoulian Vol. 102—No. 267 Published May 1, 1908 Missoula, Montana, Tuesday, April 1, 1975

ON THE EDGE OF TOWN—A combination of fog and deep grass provided an almost surrealistic setting for this photo by Allen Dekmar of Missoula of a bighorn sheep ram on the outskirts of Gardiner this past weekend. Dekmar said he was able to photograph both elk and bighorn sheep near the community on the edge of Yellowstone National Park.

The March-April issue of THE SHEEPHERDER carried a short article concerning an award given Bob Schmidt in Colorado. We now have more information concernig this award The following news release from the Colorado Department of Fish and Game by way of Dick Weaver---who assists me a great deal.

FORT COLLINS (dated March 16, 1975)

A Colorado Division of Wildlife employee, Senior Conservation Aide Robert Schmidt, of Fort Collins, has received the annual Shikar-Safari Club national award for his work in helping to save the Pikes Peak bighorn sheep herd from probable extinction.

Mahlon T. White, Pueblo official of the club, presnted the award to Schmidt at a Colorado Wildlife Division training school in Colorado Springs recently.

Jack Grieb, division director, and Harold Swope, research chief, recommended Schmidt for the award, citing his dedication, resourcefulness and hard work in apparantly saving about 40 bighorn lambs from certain death from lungworm larvae passed from the ewe to lamb during pregnancy.

Over the years there has been a continuous deterioration in Colorado and in other states of bighorn sheep populations due to lungworm parasite from snail infected bed grounds. Although adult sheep have been apparantly able to withstand some infestation, it was found by Colorado State University parasitologists that larvae passed from the ewe to the lamb before birth were killing a high percentage of lambs before they could live through their first summer. So great was this mortallity that, without lamb reproduction, the Pikes Peak bighorn herd was doomed to extinction in a few years as older animals perished.

Officer Schmidt, without waiting for an experimental chemo-therapeutic drug control study on captive animals, devised a uniquely baited drop-trap on Pikes Peak tofacilitate capture, and instituted a treatment with drugs used on domestic animals and marked the ewes in the herd.

Observations of the ewes and their lambs in the fall and winter, 1974, showed that, while 71 untreated ewes had only 4 surviving lambs, 62 treated ewes had 41 lambs that survived the summer mortallity period and are now expected to thrive and perpetuate the herd. Experimental work will continue, but Bob Schmidt's efforts are expected to have far-reaching benefits for other beleagered bighorn populations in Colorado and other wild sheep states.

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NOTE: I tried, unsuccessfully to get a picture of Bob Schmidt, to run in this issue. lew.

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THIRD DESERT BIGHORN BORN IN CAPTIVITY

Two years ago the Living Desert Reserve in Palm Desert, Riverside County, was the site of the first birth in captivity of a desert bighorn sheep in California.

During the first week of June, the same ewe, now 5½ years old, gave birth to a third lamb, bringing to six the number of bigorn sheep at the research facility operated by the University of California at Riverside.

The research facility consists of several acres of the sheep's natural, rugged habitat. Under study is the physiology of the bighorn in the field and in the laborator.

In addition to the mother and the lamb, animals at the facility are an adult ram, 4; a two and a half year old ewe; a ram 2, and a yearling ewe.

Meanwhile, six California bighorn lambs have been born this spring at the Lava Beds National Monument in Siskiyou County in and experiment to reintroduce the bighorn into the northeastern part of California.

Jim Blaisdell of the National Park Service reports that all of the six breeding age ewes produced lambs this spring. The National Park Service operates the facility which is a cooperative venture with the California Department of Fish and Game; the U.S. Forest Service; the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The present bighorn population within this 1100 acre enclosure is not 22. Ten sheep were introduced into the enclosure during October 1971. It is hoped that it will soon be possible to release some of these animals into the wild as a free-roaming herd. The bighorns have been absent from this area in the wild state since about 1910- 1915.

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ANNUAL BANQUET SET FOR OCTOBER 4, 1975

The Annual Banquet of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep has been set for October 4th, It will be held at Michael's, 4600 Los Feliz Boulevard, Los Angeles, California , in the Parisian Room.

The Water Hole Count or sometimes called adjustment hour--NO-HOST is 6:30 p.m. Bar drinks are scheduled for $1.10---facilities are termed excellent.

DINNER: Served at 7:30 p.m. will be: Filet Mignon, baked potato, vegetable, Mixed green salad, choice of roqueford or 100 island dressing, tea, coffeee, or milk, dessert-chocalate parfait. The $7.50 tab for dinner will include taxes and gratuities. There will be an adequate public address system. Youwill be able to hear our after dinner speakers, and they are good. Ben and Miriam Romero have been talking to groups all over the southland and are well known. Their program "THE JACKS ARE WILD" is of course about the burro, sometimes known as 'the desert canary'. Also on the program is Peter G. Sanchez, Natural Resource Specialist of the Death Valley National Monument. He will discuss burro management as carried on in the Monument.

SO, PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW , RIGHT NOW AND THEN COME.

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WILD HORSE AND BURRO ADVISORY BOARD REESTABLISHED

The Bureau of Land Management announced on July 9, 1975 that the above Board had been reestablished. The new members are: Dr. Thadis W. Box of Logan, Utah; Arnold D. Ewing fo Eugene, Oregon; William L. Reavley, Western REgional Executive Director of the National

Wildlife Federation. Reappointed for one-year terms were: Pearl Rainwater Twynne of Great Falls, Va.---American Horse Protective Assoc. and Virginia Federation of Humane Societies; Velma B. Johnson, "Wild Horse Annie", Reno, Nevada; Dr. Charles Hungerford of Tuscon, Arizona. Other members with longer terms are: Dr. Floyd W. Frank of Moscow, Idaho; Roy Young of Elko, Nevada and Dean Prosser, Jr., of Cheyenne, Wyoming. ---From now on there will be three (3) new members to the Board selected yearly.

LEGISLATIVE STATUS OF BILLS AND COURT DECISIONS RELATED TO BURRO PROBLEMS

Still no decision on the BLM Organic Act has been announced
H.R. 2935--proposed amendments to PL-92-195 The Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971---is still in limbo--- No attempt will be made to move this Resolution until decision is made on the Organic Act.
SUPREME COURT DECISION concerning the constitutionallity of the PL 92-195 not expected prior to October first.

The National Wildlife Federation in their July 1, 1975 issue of THE CONSERVATION NEWS carry an article by Louis Clapper and Bill Reavley, titled: Congressional Proposals Would Ease Wild Horse Problem. The article is basically thesame as articles carried in THE SHEEPHERDER in the last three isssues of this year. And so, will not be reviewed. Friends of wildlife and especially the desert bighorns can be thankful that the powerful NWF is truly supporting a positive management program for these feral horses and burros.

Photo by Kent & Donna Dannen

Though seemingly cute and cuddly, feral burros are becoming a serious problem in some areas, overgrazing already denuded land.

CN 7-1-75

Also, and largely through the efforts of Bill Reavley and your editor, the National Wildlife Federation has contracted with a professional writer to write a feature article on the desert bighorn sheep, and the many problems which they face in the struggle for survival. Many members of the Society have served as sources of information for the writer of this upcoming feature in the National Wildlife magazine. We look forward to having an opportunity to review this article prior to its publication by the World's largest and most prestigious Conservation organization. QUESTION: ARE YOU A MEMBER?

ADMITTED SHEEP KILLER MUST MAKE RESTITUTION
California DFG "NEWS" release of July 5, 1975

The admitted slayer of a California bighorn ram on a refuge in Siskiyou County must make restitution of $3,000 as a condition of three years probation for the offense.

Superior Court Judge James E. Kleaver sentenced Dennis Russell Gomes, 22, of Lodi, San Joaquin County, when Gomes appeared befor him June 30 in Yreka.

Gomes isone of two lodi men who were accused of killing the ram in northeastern California more than a year and a half ago. His co-defendant, Johnnie Ray Kearney, 24, was granted immunity from criminal prosecution in exchange for his testimony at Gomes' preliminary hearing May 12.

Both defendants were accused in felony complaints of killing an animal belonging to the state, but Gomes was permitted to plead guilty to the charge carrying a fine of $500.

Although Judge Kleaver imposed no fine, he did order Gomes to make restitution for the loss of the ram. The value of a free-roaming bighorn sheep has been placed as high as $10,000.

Also as conditions of probation, Gomes may neither hunt nor possess a hunting license or any firearm during the three-year period. In addition, he must serve four consecutive weekends in jail beginning July 25. The time will be served in the San Joaquin County jail.

Gomes has been free on $2,000 bond since the pair were arrested in Lodi last February 26 after a lengthy investigation headed by Department of Fish and Game Patrol Captains Ray Nilsson of Yreka and James Wictum of Lodi.

According to Kearney, Gomes shot at the ram early on the morning of October 20, 1973. Gomes' rifle misfired, Kearney said, and so he borrowed Kearney's to shoot the ram.

Federal officials said they found the ram dead that night within the 1,100-acre enclosure at the Lava Beds National Monument where state and federal agencies have reintroduced the bighorn sheep into northern California.

One month after the first ram was found dead, the flock's only other ram was discovered dead and partly devoured, also the apparant victum of a poacher's bullet.

The killings left the flock with 16 sheep, six of which were born in the enclosure after the DFG and British Columbia's Department of Recreation and Conservation transplanted 10 sheep from the Canadian province to California late in 1971.

With the birth of six bighorn lambs this spring, the population of the site now totals 22.

Costs of the project have been estimated at nore than $62,000 or $6,200 per animal.

The bighorn sheep has been a fully protected animal under California law since 1873.

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DRILLING PROJECTS

John Massie, Wildlife Habitat Supervisor for the Department of Fish and Game has informed the editor that the first well to be drilled using the new Horizontal Drill Equipment purchased by the Southern California Safari Club will be at Mesquite Spring. This spring is located on the recently acquired property, by the DFG, using Wildlife Conservation Board Funds. This site is one readily accessible by trucks needed to move the equipment to the project site. Personnel have much to learn in order to have the needed expertise to handle this equipment.

The second project will be at the Mopah Spring in the Turtle mountains. In this case it will be necessary to move the equipment to the project site by use of helicopter. Due to present restrictions of the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management vehicles are not permitted to approach the Mopah Springs. The reason being the wanton destruction and vandalism that has taken place at the spring.

At the present it appears that the DFG will contract with a private firm to do the drilling at Smith Spring in the Sacramento Mts. southwest of Needles. Massie is trying to get Fish and Game Preservation Funds for this project from the County Board of Supervisors of San Bernardino County. The contractor has been in to the site to look it over. The Smith Spring site is in a real narrow place and in a tight canyon, and will be a difficult job to accomplish. Hopefully this project may get the green light this summer.

EDITORIAL. A most serious and imprtant problem facing our wildlife is the loss of it's habitat. The most improtant part of this environment is the soil of the habitat. When the soil is gone, whether by wind or water, then nothing remains to sustain the vegetation upon which all wildlife depends. (This is also true concerning the human race). Overgrazing of the vegetation available, or its trampling by too many ungulates, or the trailing or wallowing of these animals, leads to the loss of these vital soils. The loss of ample and nutritious vegetation then, of course, leads to malnutrition of the wildlife depending on this vegetation, and their subsequent death by either starvation, disease or parasites.

The animal most destructive of the vegetation and soils of the desert environment, in those areas where they occur, is the feral burro. THE SHEEPHERDER has carried numerous articles and reports concerning this depredation during the past two years.

The three organizations which have assisted the Society for the Conservation of bighorn sheep over the past several years have been the California Wildlife Federation; the National Wildlife Federation and the Sierra Club. Some chapters of the National Audubon Society have also adopted resolution advocating management of the feral burro.

The Sierra Club's Burro Management Policy was carried in the May-June issue of THE SHEEPHERDER.

The California Wildlife Federation has given full support before the California State Legislature on every proposal of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep.

The National Wildlife Federation has been informing it's membership through it's CONSERVATION NEWS of the problems engendered by the feral burro.

I believe that each member of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep should also seriously consider becoming a member of both the California Wildlife Federation and also of the Sierra Club.

Application blanks are at the bottom of the page.

Carpenter

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Dues include subscription to the Sierra Club Bulletin ($3.00), and chapter publications ($1.00).

*Admission fee is waived for junior members, full-time students and life members.