SOCIETY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIGHORN SHEEP

The Sheepherder

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MAY -JUNE 1975

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR QUAIL AND CHUKAR COUNTS

During the first 3 weekends of June many volunteers are needed to conduct population counts of the quail and chukar partridges in the New York Mts., the Mid Hills, Providence Mts., and in the Granite Mountains. These population figures will probably be the determinants as to whether or not these areas will be open to upland bird hunting this fall of 1975. If you can assist in this project, please contact Doctor Loren L. Lutz at the office address-401 North Garfield, Alhambra, Ca. 91801 either by mail or telephone. The office phone is 213 - 284 - 5113. Dr. Lutz will then make assignments as to areas and specific locations and dates, should you have no preference. If you do have preference as to dates and/or locations let Doctor Lutz know this so that he can, if possible, direct you to an assignment on those dates and area. There is very little time remaining between now and the first weekend of May 31 - June 1st. The other two weekends for these counts are: June 7th and 8th; and June 14th and 15th.

When you contact Doctor Lutz also, please, let him know where you plan to count sheep on the weekend of July 4th, 5th and 6th. If you do not have an assignment for a waterhole-sheep count, as yet, let him know that you do desire an assignment. He will be glad to make such an assignment. There are many waterholes which need to be observed and which presently do not have people assigned to them. Also, please note that there is a related article in this issue concerning waterhole counts, and equipment needed.

The Bureau of Land Management and the Department of Fish and Game would like to set this area aside for wildlife, hunting, etc. We do need people to watch certain waterholes in this area in order to build a good case for this action. Any weekend will help, and possibly all three. Doctor Lutz may also be reached by phone at 213- 797-1287.

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SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL LENDS A HELPING HAND --AGAIN

We have carried articles on several occassions telling of the things which the Safari Club International - Los Angeles Chapter has done for benefits to wildlife. In the march-April issue of THE SHEEPHERDER we noted that a letter from the Director of Fish and Game Department had said that the Horizontal Drilling Equipment we have been working to get was out of the question for at least another year--and probably longer. We have hoped to purchase this equipment so that some of the potential waters of the desert mountains could be tapped for permanent water for wildlife. This item of $7,000 would have to have approval of the State Legislature's Budget Review Committee. It is now gratifying to learn that the Safari Club has purchased and donated a new horizontal drilling equipment to the Department of Fish and Game. This acquisition is now being readied into three parcels to keep the weight and bulk down to the capabilities of a helicopter to transport it into the project site.

A letter from John Massie, Wildlife Habitat Supervisor, DFG Region 5, received May 9th. says that last week while making a helicopter flight in the Last Chance Mts. he saw two pregnant ewes. He also adds, " The Department of Finance has just accepted title to the drill rig and we will be doing our first work on Magnesia Spring in Riverside County on the 14th of the month, if everything goes as planned.....Yes, we believe we can divide the rig up far enough to allow a B-1 to lift it in and out. I am not sure our present crew has the expertise necessary to work on Smith Spring yet. It may take a couple of jobs before we are able to gain that sort of confidence. You know that Smith Spring sits in a very difficult location on the side of a rather steep escarpment.

Perhaps Mopah pring in the Turtles would give us an opportunity to work on the drill rig in a helicopter supported operation." John, is really correct in saying that the Smith Spring site is a difficult one to get in and out of with a helicopter. There is very little side room.

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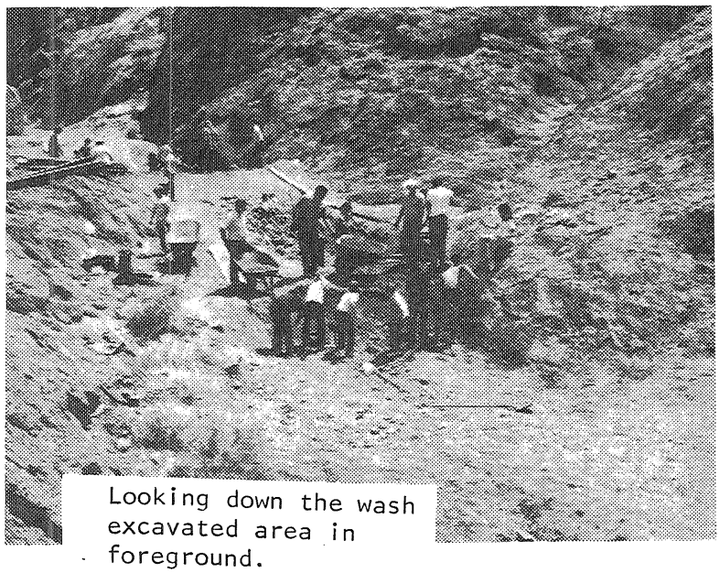
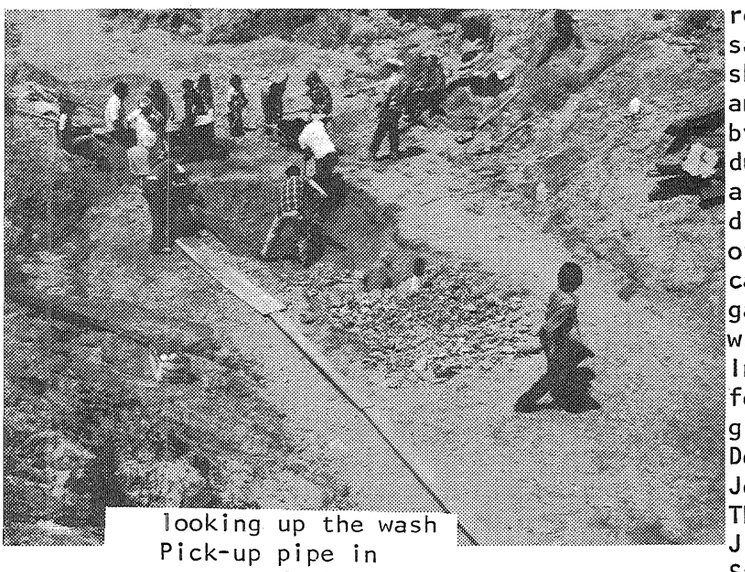
NEEDLES SCOUTS GIVE ASSIST TO WILDLIFE



Looking down the wash excavated area in foreground.



looking up the wash Pick-up pipe in center of picute.

The Red Rock Caves water project was rehabilitated on Saturday April 12th. This project is about 18 miles southwest of Needles and in the Sacramento Mts. Torrential rains of last August probably as much as 6" fell in a 24 hour period and completly filled the catchment basin with sand and rock. Friday evening 9 Boy Scouts, Troop58 under the leadership of Scoutmaster Arnold Meacham and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Stone and 5 Bee Hive Class girls under leadersip of Miss Susan Collins arrived at the project site for an overnight campout. Saturday morning Les Coombes of the DFG brought 9 Webelo Scouts, Troop 50 with their Den Leader William DeLay and Cubmaster Jim Seden in for the days work. Coombes had brought in 4 wheelbarrows, shovels and planks ahead of time. While Coombes installed a new and larger strainer on the pickup pipe, Lew Carpenter, team captain of the Sacramento Mts. for the Society, directed the Scouts, the girls and their leaders in the removal of between 30 and 40 cubic yards of sand and rock from the catchment, using the shovels and wheelbarrows. It is really amazing and gratifying to see how much work can be done by 23 youngsters ages 10 through 13 and 6 adults during a 5 hour work session. These young people all had a good time and are proud of what they did accomplish, and the Society is appreciative of their efforts. Mr. and Mrs McShann of Needles came out to the project to take picture and to gather information for an article they plan to write for their monthly magazine, FOOTPRINTS. In addition to those participants mentioned the following worked on the project. Bee Hive Class girls: Candy Stone, Lisa Taif, Kathryn Hartwick, Debra Walker and Victoria Parks; Webelos: Jeff Seden, Kelly DeLay, Daniel McKeever, Mike Thomas, Brad Walter, Sean Lackey, Doug Parks, Jim Cheney and Charles Kemp; Boy Scouts: Kelly Stone, Scott Seden, Kenneth Foy, Jr., Aaron Lee Bennett, James Parks, Billy Hartwick, Jay Parbaash and Brian Walker. All of the young people and their leaders are under the sponsorship of the Latter Day Saints Church of Needles. The Scouts had been up early that morning and had taken a long hike around the cliffs and caves of the area. During their wanderings two of the Scouts had found a large ram skull, very battered and weather worn.

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SURVEYOR SPRING REHABILITATED

On April 6th the Surveyor Spring water catchment basin was cleaned of the sand and gravel washed into it during the extrememly heavy rainstorms and accompanying heavy run-off of water during August of 1974. The storage tanks here like those of the Red Rock Caves project are now dry. Rain is sorely needed at this time if these projects are to be of any assist to wildlife during the coming heat of summer months. This clean-out work was done during one day by Bud Weideman, Jerry David, Bob Juergens, Dr. Loren Lutz and Chuck West all of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep. The Department of Fish and Game men who were also on the job working--on a day-off were John Massie and Mike Bird.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

June 28, 1975 - tentative date for the meeting of the Officers and Board of Directors at Bob Johnson's chalet--Lake Arrowhead. Members of the Society may have suggestions for items deemed of benefit to the Society and the well-being of the bighorns. If so, write to Dr. Lutz at the Society's office

July 4 -5-6, 1975 --- DATES BEING RESERVED for Waterhole Counts throughout the desert mountain ranges. If you can go and have no assignment contact by letter or telephone Doctor Lutz at his Alhambra address or cntact John Massie at the Department of Fish and Game in Long Beach---350 Golden Shore zip 90802; ph. 213 - 435 - 7741 See related article about WATERHOLE COUNT NEEDS.

September 27, 1975 Waterhole project ---Chemehuevi Mts. --Eastern San Bernardino County

November 8, 1975 Water project in the Clark Mts. Eastern San Bernardino County.
March 1976 Kelso Peak and then on May 1976 Nopah Mts .

October 4, 1975 Annual Society Dinner -- in Los Angeles area--place not yet set.

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Doctor Lutz reports items of interest

W hile talking with Doctor Lutz recently, he told the editor of planning session which are being conducted between members of The Society, The Southern Council of Conservation Clubs and the U.S. Forest Service staff members of Region 5--the state office of the Forest Service; The National Park Service; the Bureau of Land Management; Department of Fish and Game; the Southern Pacific Lands Company and other citizens concerning the High Country-that is along the crest of the Sierras. Presently there is no general California plan for this area, hence no coordination of what should or should not be done in or to this beautiful and rugged country. This is of especial concern to the Society For the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep as all of the Sierras from the Oregon border to its southern terminus is historic bighorn sheep range and there are sheep presently inhabiting some of these areas. It is pretty well established that there are also some relict bands of bighorns in several areas. These relict bands are really threatened. If the so called 'developers' are permitted to do what they wish in these areas, with their unneeded subdivisions; unneeded roads; airports; dams; resorts and ski lifts and their attendant structures. Then , in these areas there will never be any possibility of restoring the native wildlife, especially the sheep, to these areas. The third meeting of these concerned citizens is to be held in Bishop on May 17th and 18th, 1975.

Doctor Lutz also report a growing conflict between the Rocky Mountain Bighorns of Wild Horse Island, in Flathead Lake, Montana, with the wild horses on the island. Prior to enactment of Public Law 92-195 it was possible to keep the horse population in balance with the bighorns. Wildhorse Island is a privately owned island. There is an excellent population of bighorns on the island. Many sheep have been trapped here and used for reintroduction programs in other areas of historic bighorn ranges.
Wild free-roaming horses are not as great a threat to wildlife, especially the sheep, here in California as is the feral burro. Generally the horse does not despoil the vegetation or waterhole to the extent of the burro. In other of the western states the wildhorse is becoming a very increasing threat to wildlife. They are not found in great numbers in the very hot and dry areas of the deserts as are the burro. The BLM's Susanville District has a large population of wildhorses which are increasing rapidly. The burro in that area are also increasing, but not as rapidly as the horses. Also in California there is a small band of horses in the Rockhouse Canyon area near the Anza Borrego State Park and another band of 5 wildhorses in the Los Padres National Forest.

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The present status of H.R. 2935, the proposed amendment to the PL 92-195- The Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 is that it is presently inactive and not scheduled for hearing. The reason for the inactivity is that this same language which is in HR 2935 is also in the BLM Organic Act now being studied by the Subcommittee on Public Lands of the Interior and Insular Committee. The last report which I have (editor) is that the Organic Act has the best chance of adoption this year than has been the case in the past four or five years. Also a letter from the BLM Washington Office indicates that the Supreme Court will probably not hand down a decision on the constitutionality of PL 92-195 befor October or November. If either of these two measures is successful inobtaining adoption into law, then the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management will have two very sorely needed tools with which to manage the burro numbers on public lands. Should both measures be defeated, then the next best alternative will be to pursue legislation dealing with burro management and horse management as separate issues. This is also presently being studied.

Support for proper management of the exotic competitors of the desert wildlife is growing. As an informed public learns the truth about this competion with native wildlife

Support for proper management of the exotic competitors of the desert wildlife is growing. As an informed public learns the truth about the extent and seriousness of this competition, and bases their judgement upon reason rather than on emotion the greater becomes the likelihood of proper management authority being given by National legislation.

At the present time we feel confident that the National Audubon Society will support such legislation on the National level. Several local chapters have already done so. On May 23 - 26th there is to be about 150 Audubon Chapter members on tour of the Naval Weapons Center at China Lake to see first hand and to hear in person the problems associated with the problems involving the feral burro. The tour is being conducted by Mrs. Tilly Barling, Natural Resources Specialist for the Center and by Peter G. Sanches, Natural Resource Specialist for the Death Valley National Monument. Included on this conference will be campfire talks as well as on the ground tours.

Another large plus has been the adoption of a burro management policy by the Sierra Clubs Statewide Natural Resource Conservation Committee of the Feral Burro Policy that was proposed by the Southern California Regional Conservation Committee. The Policy states:

"The Sierra Club believes the goal of wildlife management should be to insure a natural diversity within natural ecosystems by means that involve a minimum of overt human interference.

"The introduction of non-native species of animals and plants into natural ecosystems which native wildlife may be displaced or destroyed is inconsistent with sound consevation principles. It should be assumed that such introductions would have a damaging effect on existing natural ecosystems unless clear evidence to the contrary exists."

Among their recommendations the Sierra Club recognizes that feral burros and feral horses are two distinct species and that they occupy dissimiar ecological niches; that the feral burro must be strictly managed and controlled; Federal and State agencies must insure that burro management methods are humane; the Sierra Club recognizes that mechanized transportation for management purposes is both desirable and necessary; that the use of firearms by competent Federal agencies or their appointees is a humane method of direct reduction of feral burros; the Sierra Club recognizes and endorses the concept of private ownership of feral burros as pets or pack animals; Opposes the utilization of feral burros for sporting purposes, including wrangling or mustanging of herds, bu rro racing, or for any similar activity; the Sierra Club suggests that, when feasible, carcasses resulting from burro reduction be donated to government instutions.

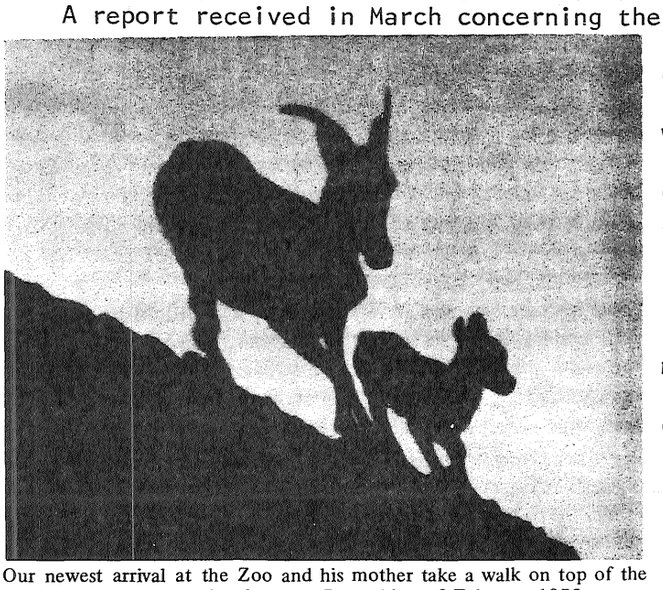
Further recommendations for Protection of native ecosystems and fragile resources are: Burro herds must be culled in areas where native habitats have become impoverished because of overpopulation, and where overgrazing is evident. Burro herd numbers should be maintained at a level which would minimize impacts on native habitats; the burro must be eliminated from all Federal and State lands where there are habitats in which rare, endangered, threatened, or endemic species of flora and fauna exist; the feral burro must be eliminated from all Federal and State areas which are protected by the Antiquities Act; The feral burro must be eliminated from all National Parks and Monuments; burros must be managed and controlled in National Recreation Areas, and removed from these sections of the National Recreation Areas in which rare, endangered, threatened or endemic biota, or cultural sites protected under the Atiquities Act.

Recommendations for Congressional action are: The Sierra Club recommends that PL 92-195 (The Wild Horse and Burro Act) be amended so as to apply only to wild (feral) horses; and the Sierra Club recommends that a Feral Burro Management Bill be introduced in Congress which would delineate burro management concepts, and which would establish sanctuaries in areas where it has been determined, through proper scientific studies and environmental impact statements, that there is sufficient forage, water, annual primary productivity, and soil conditions to maintain burro herds, and which would have minimal effect on native wildlife.

EVEN BIGHORNS GET STUCK OCCASIONALLY

From the Arizona Game and Fish Department, news release of May 9th," The Department's Region VI officers had to rescue a bighorn ram from a ledge in Aravaipa Canyon on April 22. The ram had somehow gotten trapped on a long ledge in a very remote part of the canyon sbout 80 feet from the top, and approximately 600 feet from the bottom. According to Bud Bristow, regional supervisor, the rescuers lowered themselves down onto the ledge where Department Research Biologist Gerry Day injected the ram with a tranquillizing drug from a specially designed CO-2 rifle. After the ram was semi-conscious, the officers found they hadn't enough rope to lower him to the canyon floor, so they had to lift the 180 lb. sheep to the top. When the drug wore off, the ram was released and was last seen, apparantly in good health, making his way up the rocks to the top of the canyon.

A report received in March concerning the Phoenix Zoo and it's inhabitants.



Our newest arrival at the Zoo and his mother take a walk on top of the ridge. This photo was taken by Doug Reynolds on 8 February 1975.

According to information supplied the department by Phoenix Zoo official, Jack Tinker, it appears that the second of the two bighorn ewes would soon give birth to a lamb. The first of the two ewes captured along the Colorado River, gave birth to her lamb the last of January. The zoo officials are of course overjoyed with the prospect of increasing their sheep population.

The Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society like the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep has a very active program in the development of water sources for desert wildlife. Their schedule calls for a minimum of five water development projects annually. They have also had problems in cleaning out watercatchments that have been filled with sand brought in by severe summer storms of 1974, and have had to resort to bucket brigade procedures in order to clear the debris.

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During a break in the meetings of the Desert Bighorn Council (April 1975) Carl Mahon, of the BLM, Utah , related an incident which is of interest to me, the editor. Somewhere on the Mancos Mesa of Utah, one of the ranchers was in the process of rounding up cattle for sale. He found three bulls which had gone pretty wild, and running with them was a mature bighorn ram. The cowboys were able to catch two of the bulls and tie them up in preparation for the drive. They went looking for the third bull. When he was found the ram was still with him. After catching the three bulls, the rancher then drove the bulls some thirty miles and the ram went right along with the bulls. That night the cattle were locked up in a pole corral next to a cliff. The next morning the ram was seen walking around on top of the pole corral. The bulls were then loaded in a truck and shipped away. The bighorn ram disappeared. However during 1974 and again this spring of 1975 the ram is again seen with the other cattle of the area from which the bulls were captured. Irregardless of what this yarn may sound like, Carl swears that what he related is true,

NEEDED ITEMS FOR A WATERHOLE SHEEP COUNT

1. 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.

HAVE A GOOD WATERHOLE COUNT DURING JULY 4 -5 -and 6.

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ALASKA'S DALL SHEEP TRANSPLANT PROGRAM

The objectives of the State of Alaska in it's wildlife transplant programs has been reviewed in their Wildlife Technical Bulletin #4, entitled "Game Transplants in Alaska" by Oliver E. Burris and Donald E. McKnight. These objectives are: 1). to provide increased recreational hunting opportunities; 2). providing additional food supply; 3). Providing economic gain; 4). reestablishing a species; 5). preserving an endangered species; 6). providing the opportunity to view a species in a new environment. The first objective is the more common. However, the providing of food has also been a consideration. Certainly, if the meat could not be eaten the hunting pressure would be negligible. The economic gain has been primarily with the furbearers. This included the foxes, muskrats, beavers, sea otters and mink. The reintroduction of the muskoxen to the North Slope and the Seward Peninsula are examples of transplants conducted for the purpose of reestablishing a species. The sea otter is no longer classified as endangered in Alaskan waters. At the time the bison were reestablished it was thought that they were endangered.

Official recognition of the idea of a Dall sheep transplant in Alaska was first given when the Territorial Legislature established its stocking program in 1925. Between that time and 1950 two proposals to transplant sheep were made but were abandoned upon investigation and finding the expense to be very high.

Because of increased local interest, the Department of Fish and Game, through Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project W-11-D-2, conducted a feasibility study of the proposed transplant of Dall sheep to Kodiak Island. Field observations of the range were made throughout the year and climatic records kept to determine suitibility during the winter months. Although these studies seemed to show that a transplant would likely be unsuccessful, public interest at Kodiak was not to be denied.

Agreements were prepared and approved by the U.S. Burea of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife Refuge Supervisor to allow the removal of sheep from the Kenai National Moose Range and their subsequent release on Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. An agreement was also made with the U.S. Forest Service to allow the removal of sheep from Forest Service property on the Kenai Peninsula.

The first attempt to capture Dall sheep was made in September 1964. Several techniques were considered such as erecting traps, snaring along established trails, immobilizing with drugs at natural licks and several other possibilities. The method seeming to hold the most promise was immobilizing the sheep with drugs administered from a helicopter. Alaska like the other states had their troubles with finding proper immobilizing agents and dosage requirements which would do the job and not endanger the animals being captured, and like the other states they had their successes and failures.

A second full scale attempt to capture sheep was begun in 1965, using drugs administered from helicopters. Twenty sheep were captured and 13 were transported and released on Kodiak Island. Six of these sheepdied from the effects of the drugs and the stress of handling and holding. In the course of routine testing for brucellosis and other diseases, it was determined that one sheep had a suspect test for brucellosis and this animal was not transplanted. Immediately after the effects of the immobilizing drug had begun to wear off, tranquillizers were administered to prepare them for the helicopter flight to the airstrip. Once there they were restrained by placing soft leather collars about their necks and tethering them to trees. Within a short time the animals would cease struggling and lie quietly. Transportation of the animals to Kodiak Island was accomplished with a DFG Grumman Goose. Animals which were held at the airstrip were hobbled and loaded aboard the airplane and relaeased on the beach at Uganik Bay. Transportation and release were well coordinated and on the last day the animals captured in the morning were released in the afternoon. Mortallity after the animals were released was high. At least seven of the sheep died by May 22, 1965. The high mortallity was attributed to the relatively poor physical condition of the sheep that season.

In 1967 two additional sheep were captured on the Kenai Peninsula and transplanted on Kodiak Island. As in 1965, attempts to capture sheep resulted in excessive mortallity. It was recommended at that time that no further sheep transplants be attempted until adequate capture techniques were perfected.

A report on the transplant, received in the summer of 1966, indicated that a ram, ewe and newborn lamb had been seen at the headwaters of Barling Bay, approximately thirty miles from the release site at Uganik Bay.

In November 1974, seven sheep were observed near the head of Zachar Bay drainage 50 miles south of Kodiak. Composition of the group was four adult ewes, one lamb, one mature ram and one yearling.

CLIPPER MOUNTAINS WATER PROJECT -Report by John Larronde

The largest number of volunteers to ever turn out for a Department of Fish and Game water development project, assembled at the Fish and Game campsite on Friday evening and Saturday morning, April 4 & 5, 1975. The location of the campsite was at the intersection of Interstate Highway 40 and Kelbaker road some thirteen miles west of the Clipper Mts. water project site. The more than 173 hardy men, women and children were from all parts of Southern California and represented members of the Society, Southern Council of Conservation Clubs, Panorama Sportsmen's Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Associated Blazers of California, Pierce College and others.

At 0700 hours, April 5, 1975, John Massie and his able crew from the Fish and Game Department assembled all of the vehicles, about 25, for the drive to the parking area in the foothills of the Clipper Mts., and about four miles from the project site. After arriving at the parking area as many as possible climbed aboard the four wheel drive vehicles for the ride to the site with the rest of the unlucky people walking. However, it was soon evident that the people walking were getting to the project site just as fast as the four wheelers, due to the extreme roughness of the jeep trail. After about three miles the vehicles were parked and all proceeded on foot to the site. There all of thematerials and equipment necessary for constuction of the waterhole were on hand, having

been been helicoptered in during the previous week. The two cement mixers were put to use immediately after the locations for the water catchment dam and the three 1200 gallon tanks were cleared and prepared for the concrete. Sand bucket brigades were formed by those not working at the dam and tank sites and the cement mixers were kept rotating continuously until they were completed. In the meantime the pipeline was being put in place. Bud Weideman, of the Society, supervised the building of the drinker and by mid-afternoon the project was completed. This was a record time for the completion of a water hole project, thanks to the efforts of all those present.-------John Larronde also made the photos.

LODI MAN HELD TO ANSWER IN BIGHORN SHEEP DEATH

Sacramento, Department of Fish and Game News Release of May 17, 1975.

"One of two Lodi, San Joaquin County, men accused of killing a bighorn ram in northeastern California more than a year and a half ago must answer the charge in Superior Court, a Siskiyou County Judge has ruled.

Dennis Russell Gomes, 22, was ordered bound over to Superior Court after co-defendent Johnnie Ray Kearney, 24, was granted immunity from prosecution in exchange for his testimony at Gomes' preliminary hearing Monday (May 12).

Kearney, one of eight witnesses to testify at the hearing, told Yreka Court Judge George G. Tyler that Gomes shot at the ram early on the morning of October 20, 1973. Gomes' rifle misfired, so he borrowed Kearney's to shoot at the ram, Kearney said.

Federal officials said they found the dead ram the night of October 20. The animal was part of a flock inside a 1100-acre enclosure at Lava Beds National Monument, where state and federal agencies are attempting to reintroduce bighorn sheep to northern California.

Kearney and Gomes were arrested in Lodi on February 26 after a lengthy investigation headed by Department of Fish and Game Patrol Captains Ray Nilsson of Yreka and James Wictum of Lodi. Both defendants were accused in felony complaints of maliciously killing an animal belonging to the state.

Before the hearing began, Superior Court Judge James E. Kleaver granted immunity to Kearney under an agreement providing for Kearney's testimony at the hearing. Charges against Kearney were dismissed later on a motion of Assistant District Attorney Charles D. Slote.

Gomes, who is free on a $2,000 bond, is scheduled to be arraigned in Superior Court in Yreka on May 27 at 11 a.m."

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DESERT BIGHORN COUNCIL

DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP

DESERT BIGHORN COUNCIL

During the the April 9 to 11th meeting of the Desert Bighorn Council, Jim Blaisdell, Biologist of the National Park Service, who watches over the bighorns at the Lava Beds in the previous article, spoke ofthe recent happenings of this project and gave something of its background, all of which has been previously reported. As noted previously, the sheep were introduced in 1970 from British Columbia. In April of 1973 it was doubtfull if there would be any lamb crop that year as the ram from Nevada had not arrived in time for the fall breeding period. However, there was a lamb crop that spring. This indicated that apparantly the yearling rams were of breedable age. During the fall of 1974 yearlings were observed breeding the ewes. This did substantiate the belief that that the rams were sexually mature at about 18 months of age. During the month of September 6 sheep were lost from the flock as a result of Blue Tongue. There is a history of Blue Tongue in both Domestic sheep and deer in Oregon. The virus is carried by a gnat, which of course, can travel a long way on a wind. A lot of trouble was had in getting a laboratory confirmation of the cause of death. Finally, Jim took the carcass of a dead ewe, by airplane to the Oregon State University at Corvallis for analysis. Samples of tissue were sent from there to The University of Iowa for further study and the cause of death was confirmed to be a strain of Blue Tongue. Cold weather then came to northern California and ended the threat of further infection for the year. Two of the three guzzlers were then closed off from use and the third water source was treated with a medication to combat any present infection. In order to make the water more attractive, Jim used wild raspberry jello as an attractant. Then, late in October the ram obtained from Nevada the previous year disappeared. No trace of where he went, how he went, or whether he escaped or was taken has been determined. There are at present 15 sheep in the enclosure. Jim did state that two men had been arrested for the poaching effort and that they would be given their day in court in the month of May. Nothing more could be

stated at that time in April about the case, other than the charge was Grand Theft, a felony. Concerning a vaccine to prevent any infection in coming year(s). It is questionable. The Vaccine is very rough on the sheep; then there is the matter of stress that the sheep would be placed under if innoculated; also there are several strains of Blue Tongue, some can be innoculated against and some cannot; also it is very difficult to determine which of the 12 strains of Blue Tongue is the cause of the infection.

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C.E. "Charlie" Fullerton, Director of the Department of Fish and Game and C.E. "Chet" Hart, Executive Officer of the Wildlife Conservation Board were in attendance at the dinner. Hart announced that the Wildlife Conservation Board did now have authority to spend, after July 1, 1975, some $362,000 for the purchase of nearly 8 sections of land in the Martinez Canyon. This will block up all of the public lands and that which was previously private lands into one solid block of public lands and will effectively block any roadways into other private lands or public lands which might be considered for sub-division purposes. The money for this land acquisition is a part of the money authorized by the voters of California in the election of 1974 when the Bond Act was approved. The Society for the Conservation has had this as an objective for the past 5 years. Other parcels of land were also acquired for wildlife benefits one in the Santa Rosa Mountains for sheep and one in the Sierra National Forest--Kinsman Flat area which is winter habitat for a sorely pressed deer herd of the San Joaquin River drainage.(80 acres). Other members of the WCB include the Director of the DFG and Senators; Carpenter, Nejedly and Dunlap. Also some funds of the Wildlife Conservation Board which are derived from Pari-Mutual betting at horse races will be used for bighorn habitat purchases near Hidden Springs and the Carrizo Spring areas. A total of nearly $500,000 will be spent on the above projects.

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On April 10, 1975 the Desert Bighorn Council adopted the following resolution and requests the assistance of all interested people and organizations in getting it implemented.

Resolution concerning"Corn Creek Desert Bighorn Pens at Desert National Wildlife Range.
WHEREAS,authorizations and obligations of the US Fish and Wildlife Service include the conduct of research necessary to provide a sound biological basis for fish and wildlife conservation and management, and of the National Wildlife Refuge System to provide a place for wildlife research; and
WHEREAS, Executive Order 7373 dated May 20, 1936, as amended, set aside certain lands within the state of Nevada, now known as the Desert National Wildlife Range, primarily "for the conservation and development of natural wildlife resources," further recognizing the "Nelson's mountain sheep" as the primary species of concern; and
WHEREAS, on the basis of inconsistencies with objectives of this preserve, administrative action is presently being considered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service to eliminate a thirty year-old development used partially as a research facility for the desert bighorn at Corn Creek, Desert National Wildlife Range; and
WHEREAS, this preserve, and particularly its proven successful pens when used for conducting research activities, has a history of providing significant contributions to improved knowledge of the life history, biology, propogation, production, and related matters applicable to the desert bighorn or "Nelson's mountain sheep," as well as providing a secondary benefit associated with evolvement of public awareness, appreciation and concern for the welfare of this valuable animal; and
WHEREAS, with adequate funding the existing facility should not conflict with managemnt objectives of the Wildlife Range; and
WHEREAS, fully successful and acceptable facilities which will meet all of the values for research do not exist elsewhere within the range of the desert bighorn; and
WHEREAS, research needs are identified in the document "Guidelines for management for North American Bighorn" published by the Wildlife Management Institute,
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Desert Bighorn Council, an organization of professional wildlife biologists, managers, educators, investigators and concerned laymen, requests the US Fish and Wildlife Service to defer their proposed action to abolish the Corn Creek facilities and associated research programs until such time as suitable land acquisition take place to insure full protection to the Corn Creek facility, and/or other equivalent facilities are established elsewhere within the known range distribution of the desert bighorn(Ovis canadensis nelsoni); and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That copies of this resolution be furnished to the: Secretary of the Interior, Director and Regional Director, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks: Chief, US Forest Service: National Wildlife Federation; The Wildlife Society; Boone and Crocket Club; Wildlife Management Institute; Director of the Nevada Department of Fish and Game; Director of the Arizona Department of Fish and Game; Director of the Utah Department of Fish and Game; Director of the California Department of Fish and Game;Director, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; Director, New Mexico Division of Fish and Game; Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn(Nevada); Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep; Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society, Inc.; Desert Protective Association; Arizona, California and Nevada Wildlife Federations; Utah Wildlife and Outdoor Recreztion Federation and other organizations and individuals interested in the conservation of the desert bighorn.

Bonnar Blong, Chairman, Desert Bighorn Council.

Doctor Lutz reports that he and his son Kenneth had recently been to the Blue Spring project site and had cleaned out the sand and debris from the catchment and also the drinker.....While in the area they saw 3 bighorns. One was a three year old ram and the others were adult ewes. They also came upon the carcass of a dead sheep that had been eaten on by a mountain lion. However, they were unable to determine what had been the cause of death of the sheep . Doctor Lutz again stressed the real need for volunteers to assist in the conducting of quail and chukar counts during the weekends of May 31-June 1; June 7 &8th and June 14th and 15th. It is also hoped that all waterhole counts for sheep will be conducted July 4 -5 -6th, 1975