SOCIETY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIGHORN SHEEP

The Sheepherder

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Dedicated to study and promote the conservation, propagation and preservation of the wild sheep of North America.

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COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF BIGHORN SHEEP

During the past more than two or three years articles in T.S. have spoken of the ongoing conflict between the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep and the Curtis Tungsten Mining Co. interest over the roadway up Cattle Canyon in the San Gabriel Mts. to serve the interests of the mine. There were and are two possible routes that would serve the mining property. One route would not pass through any habitat of importance to the bighorns of the area and use of this route has not been objected to by the Society. The other route would pass through the most important part of the range used by this herd of bighorns--it's lambing grounds. To use of this route the Society has objected strenuously and has sought relief through the courts. An environmental assessment by the U.S. Forest Service discounted these objections as being trivial and authorized reopening and use of this route. Whereupon the Society did go before the federal court seeking an injunction which would forbid use of this route. The Society needed funds to pursue this court action. The Foundation for North American Wild Sheep immediately came to the assistance of the Society and became a party to the court action against the Forest Service and the Curtis mining interests. At long last a determination has been made and has been reported in the July 21, 1982 issue of the Los Angeles Times by it's staff writer Charles Maher reporting about this important herd of desert bighorn sheep (Ovis canadensis nelsoni). Maher stated in part: "The welfare of the sheep was not considered properly when the Forest Service permitted the reopening of a mining road running through the habitat of this herd of bighorn sheep.

A three-judge panel of the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals said "bighorn require a unique ecosystem to reproduce and rear their young. Any disturbance of that ecosystem may be potentially catastrophic to the survival of the herd," the court said.

Under federal law, the sheep are classified as a "sensitive species" and are entitled to special protection."

In an opinion by Senior Circuit Judge Walter Ely of Los Angeles, the court said the Forest Service erred in deciding not to prepare an environmental impact report before permitting the road to be reopened.

The Forest Service "failed to take the requisite "hard look" at the environmental consequences of its action," Ely wrote.

The Court of Appeals sent the case back to the trial judge "for further proceedings not inconsistent with this opinion." The apparant effect will be to compel the Forest Service to close the road until it can prepare an environmental impact report that shows that use of the road would not adversely affect the environment.

The reopening of the road was sought in 1978 by Curtis Tungsten Inc., which runs trucks in and out of the area. The conservation groups opposed the request and the Forest Service decided to undertake an environmental assessment to see whether a full-scale environmental impact report (EIR) was needed. It concluded that no EIR was necessary and issued a permit allowing Curtis Tungsten to use the road nine months a year. The sheep societies then filed their suit. As noted above the trial judge ruled in favor of the defendants. This decision has now been reversed.

The Court also stated:" The National Environmental Protection Act requires the preparation of an EIR for all "Major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the environment.

The Court noted thta that the bighorn herd with a population of some 400 to 700 animals is unique in that it is one of the very few herds of bighorn currently experiencing an increase in population. The Court also noted: "Bighorns are indigenous to the mountains of the Western United States and are purportedly extremely sensitive to environmental change."

Patrick Marley of Los Angeles, leqd attorney for the conservation groups, said that this is the first case he knows of in which a court has overruled the Forest Service on the question of the sufficiency of an environmental assessment. He stated, as has the Society, "We don't want to prevent the mining company from mining it ore. We do want to preserve future generations' rights to our environment."

It is probable that the Curtis Tungsten Co. and the Forest Service will appeal this decision in a higher court. This problem will, therefore, likely be before us for a long time in the future.

As this Court of Appeals decision now stands it is certainly a landmark decison in favor of wildlife. Let's not let our guard down. We have won a battle. Have we won a war?

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LAVA BEDS WRAP-UP - WHAT DID WE LEARN?

During one session of the Desert Bighorn Council meeting of April 1982 held at Borrego Springs, James A. Blaisdell, Retired National Park Service Biologist reviewed that which had taken place at the Lava Beds National Monumant during the past twelve years. Jim reported that: "What appeared to be a successful Califonrnia bighorn restablishment program at the Lava Beds, with resultant transplants to other California areas, came to an abrupt end in 1980. An unfortunate set of circumstances during a trapping and transplanting operation in the winter of 1980 followed by disease a few months later eliminated the entire population.

In 1970 an interagency agreement was signed by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlfie Service and the California Department of Fish and Game to cooperatively reestablish California bighorn *Ovis canadensis californiana* at the Lava Beds National Monument in Siskiyou County, California. In 1971 the original plant of ten anjmals from near Williams Lake, British Columbia took place in the 1100 acre enclosure. Generally through the years we had a successful time with normal increases in the herd, little predation, (none was documented), little harrassment by man and very great interest by the public. In 1973, the only two adult rams were shot and killed by two would-be poachers; they did not retrieve the carcasses. These men were captured and one convicted(the other turned state's witness) in 1975. In 1974, seven bighorns were lost to bluetongue, a domestic animal disease carried by the Culidoides gnat. Normanl reproduction was taking place each year. In 1975, another tragedy, also probably origination from domestic animals, occurred when sore mouth or Ecthyma, struck and we lost six lambs in a week's time. By October, 1979 there were 42 bighorns in the pen, and the Interagency committee decided it was time to move some sheep to the South Warner Mountains of Northeastern California. The capture activities to take place in February 1980. Between February and August 1980, all 42 bighorns disappeared from the Lava Beds National Monument. Four had been successfully transplanted to the Warner Mountains. Six had died from the capture exercises and 32 had been lost to disease. The trapping efforts of February may have had an adverse effect on some of the 32 lost to disease--this is uncertain. It is known and has been documented that domestic sheep had trespassed onto the Monument and were in a "nose-to-nose" vicinity to the wild but penned bighorn sheep. This nose-to-nose relationship has been documented by Monument personnel on at least eight occasions.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

If, after ten years of work with the bighorns at Lavaa Beds we can make the mistakes known to other reestablishment planners, and with the added use of the Technical Staff's publication "Trapping and Transplanting Guidelines" of the Desert Bighorn Council, this failure, this tragedy if you will, can be transformed into something of a success; it may not be a failure If the knowledge gained can be utilized by others. Let's get them down on paper so no one makes these errors again.

ne of the priliminaries before planting bighorn in an area where livestock or bighorn previously existed should be to check to determine former presence and layover of disease. This is suggested in the Guidelines. This was done at Lava Beds only partially--bighorn history was studied and it was found that elimination of Lava Beds bighorn was caused by one or more things: rough winters; poaching; horse, cattle, and sheep competition; and disease . "I always suspected it was a combination of the latter two. It would be difficult to determine causes clear back in 1912, but we can certainly check out future transplant sites mor recentily vacated by bighorn. A check of the soil and of pellets of bighorn, deer and domestic sheep could be useful."

"I strongly suggest that bighorn never be planted to an area or even directly adjacent to an area inhabited by livestock. Although the livestock might be healthy today, it is my opinion, and that of Dr. Kistner, Imust add, that they will be contracting a disease tomorrow." Whether it be an officially organized cooperative endeavor or not, be certain that all ageencies, orgaizations and individuals involved in a transplant operation are willing to go all the way, doing all it takes to make a success of the program. If it takes a change in stock allotment or a buffer zone to keep livestock away from bighorn, this must be done or the project will fail. You must find a way to do it.

Don't attempt to drive bighorn long distances in muddy areas. It is too tiring for the animals as well as the troops. Wait a week qnd try it again if the weather clears. Also make certain you can get the vehicies and equipment to the holding area. If a helicopter must be used (I'm not certain it always must be), forget the siren or other frightening devices. The animals are under enough stress already.

Be certain you have a well-designed and well-built capture and holding pen. The one at Lava Beds was not; there were too many angles and gates, and no top. Netting sides would have prevented injuries and escapes; a drop net would have been even better."

I think that if all goes well, the weather cooperates, the animals aree easily driven and trapped, a minimal amount of animal handiing for placing radios, taking blood and parasite samples, weighing, measuring and temperature taking, is an absolute necessary thing,

even though the extra manpower, noise and handling may cause some stress. In the Lava Beds case, much of this should have been dispensed with. They were tied up too long, including the long carry from the pen. Someone on the scene should be assigned to make this decision according to the situation.

"Included in the information collected during the ten years was some good biological data. For instance, we proved that both males and females can and will breed at 1½ years of age; this was not the general case however. We also discovered quite by accident and after spending considerable dollars that these animals liked their home. The rams especially, liked to escape from the pen in the spring time just for a look-see around. They will return voluntarily if there is a natural way to get back in. We chased two rams for a week on foot, by airplane and by helicopter; we had absolutely no luck driving them back, and they were given up for lost, perhaps to join a band of domestic ewes somewhere. A few days later they were back inside. Finally we learned, much to our pleasure, that the people who viewed the herd from the roadway, and even made special trips from miles away, enjoyed the experience so much that except in one case, not an animal was harmed. Much publicity and public relations work paid-off here."

Jim Blaisdell states in conclusion: "These opinios are, of course, the opinions of one person, one who was present on the project from the beginning paperwork in 1966 up to the time of the trapping and transplanting effort in 1980. In my heart, I feel there was no need to lose the Lava Beds herd of bighorn. All they needed was a little space and freedom from domestic animals. They did not get this. If, in the future, some of you bighorn workers want to get involved in a transplant program, and if you don't want to have that heavy-hearted feeling every time you think back upon it, I suggest you pay heed to what we've learned at Lava Beds National Monument." end quote.

NOTE: During the past ten months effort have been made by this editor to determine if it might be possible to try making another transplant start at the Lava Beds. He has talked with Mr. James Sleznick, Superintendent of the Monument. Mr. Sleznick wishes very much to have California bighorns once again on the Monument. The people living in the area around the monument also wish this to be done. Mr. Sleznick has had surveys made of the monument seeking a different area where such a reintroduction might be done and be away from livestock. Two areas were found. The editor has talked with Dick Weaver, Wildlife Management Biologist of California Department of Fish and Game about these areas. Both of these areas had been studied prior to the original effort and had been found not acceptable, and that the site of the 1100 acre enclosure was the only acceptable site. This past fall the editor asked Mr. Al Schiavon, Past President of the California Wildlife Federation to attempt to gather some information for him concerning the possibility of having some adjustments made to the grazing permit and alottment of the owner of the trespass sheep of 1980 which seem as the probable source of the disease that killed the 32 bighorn that died. Schiavon talked with many of the residents of the Alturas area and near the Lava Beds in Siskiyou County. All expressed the desire to once again have bighorns in their historic range on the Monument. Members of the areas Grazing Advisory Board expressed the opinion that they would be happy to recommend changes inallotments and grazing areas provided that documentary proof could be given that the trespass domestic sheep did actually transmit the disease to the bighorns in the enclosure and thereby cause their demise. This is the sticker. How can such an occurrence be documented? It is comparable to the transmission of a bad cold or the 'flu' between people. A person comes in close contact with another person with a bad cold or the flu and becomes a victim of the infection. How can you prove that this is where you did contract the infection? Association and then results are not sufficient ground to be used as proof. This matter has been discussed in meeting of the Desert Bighorn Council. Records have shown on many occasions that such 'nose-to-nose' relationship of domestic to wild sheep has on all occasions that the wild sheep did contract disease and did die. But, again this is not documentary proof. Apparantly, what must be done to establish proof is the bighorn manager-biologists must be willing to sacrifice some bighorn sheep in a laboratory situation. That these wild sheep subjects be penned, completely examined to determine that they do not carry any infections and that then they be exposed to domestic sheep which in all appearances seem to be healthy. And then wait for possible contamination to appear. It is known that domestic sheep are carriers of disease and remain perfectly healthy for long periods of time, only to fall victims of some disease under adverse weather or other conditions.

For these above reasons it appears that any possible reintroduction attempt of California bighorn sheep again into the Lava Beds National Monument may well be a long time in the future

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EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC SHEEP GRAZING ON BIGHORN SHEEP: A REVIEW

During the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council conference held during Mid-March 1982 at the Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, Nike J. Goodson of the Helena National Forest presented a paper on the above topic. In the Abstract of his paper Mr. Goodson states:

" The Gates of the Mountains area in southwestern Montana exemplifies areas where potential effects of domestic sheep grazing on bighorn sheep populations must be assessed. Based on a review of published and unpublished reports and observations, effects of domestic sheep grazing on bighorn sheep can be classified into three categories: 1. Competition for forage; 2. Competition for space (social competition); and 3. Transmission of diseases. The ability of domestic sheep to utilize steep slopes and arid ranges permits a high degree of overlap in habitat use between bighorn and domestic sheep on shared ranges. Similar food

preferences increase the potential for direct competition for forage. While individual bighorn have been observed to run with domestic sheep, social avoidance is the rule on shared ranges. This avoidance can lead to bighorns occupying only the steepest, rockiest, and least productive areas. The close genetic relationship of bighorn to domestic sheep is reflected in the susceptibility of bighorn to many diseases which domestic sheep can carry without ill effects. Co-use of ranges by domestic and bighorn sheep has been consistently linked with declines, die-offs, and extinctions of bighorn populations. While much of the evidence for competition between domestic sheep and bighorn is circumstantial, it is sufficiently strong to have promoted management decisions by land management agencies and state wildlife departments against co-use of ranges by bighorn and domestic sheep."

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MORE INFO. ON LEAD ARTICLE

The Editor of T.S. has just received a certified letter from Mr. Gray F. Reynolds, the Supervisor of the Angles National Forest concerning the Road 2N06 which was temporarialy opened for use by the Curtis Tungsten Inc. in June and which expired on July 31, 1982.

Mr. Reynolds states in his letter that: "It is the intent of this Forest to prepare an E.I.S. for the proposed issuance of a special use road permit for access to Curtis Tungsten, Inc. mining operation."

"A scoping meeting will be held at the Bidwell Forum, Glendora City Library, 140 South Glendora Avenue, Glendora, Cal.91740 at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 15, 1982

The analysis is expected to take about six months. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement should be available for public review by December, 1982. The Final E.I.S. is scheduled to be completed in March 1983.

In the menatime, Curtis Tungsten, Inc. will not be authorized to use Road 2N06.

Questions about the proposed action and Environmental Impact Statement should be directed to Charles McDonald, Environmental Coordinator, Angeles National Forest, 150 So. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101, Phone 213 - 577-0050

GUZZLER REPORT
June 1982

Under the terms of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act-----the Pitman - Robertson Act, Regular monthly reports are required. Vernon C. Bleich, Associate Wildlife Biologist for the Southern California desert region has sent in the report titled "Wildlife Habitat Improvement." In his report Bleich has noted that two springs were evaluated for future development. Major repairs were completed at two big game guzzlers, and seven big game guzzlers were inspected. Nine hundred gallons of water were hauled to the Cady Mountain Big Game Guzzler. The installation of the guzzler in the Cady Mts. was a major project of 1972. The area since that time has been plagued by a lack of rainfall. This has not been the first time that the Department of Fish and Game has had to haul water and pump it into the tank. Also during construction of the project we had troubles. A helicopter ferrying the tank to project site from Dagett had trouble and twice dropped the lower section of the tank, once at the airport and once in the canyon about 100 yards below the installation site.

The bighorns of the Cady mountains are using the facility regularly. Sheep tracks were seen mornings even during the construction period. Apparantly the bighorns were curious as to what was being done.

Other items reported by Bleich were: Pellet transects were read at seven big game guzzlers. time-lapse cameras ran for a total of four camera weeks at two big game guzzlers. Reports were received on eight small game guzzlers. Members of the Volunteer Desert Water and Wildlife Survey contributed two man days and 350 vehicle miles to project during the report period of June.

NOTE: Society members will undoutedly be called upon to a greater extent during the coming months to assist the Department in monitoring the various big game guzzlers and water improvement projects that do not involve water storage tanks. The DFG is again being hit by decreased amounts of funding for personnel and numbers of miles they are permitted to travel on habitat and other projects.

Further highlights: Two springs, Willow and DuVal, Inyo Mts., in Inyo County, were evaluated for developemnt possibilities. It was decided to drill a horizontal well at Willow Spring, to make water permanaently available for Mule deer inhabiting the area. BLM personnel are handling the necessary helicopter contract work and environmental documents for this project.

Maintenance of existing projects was required at the South I-40 Big Game Guzzler to repair a broken pipeline. In the Old Dad # 1 project there was a leaky union in the pipe line and the guzzler was dry, as a result of over utilization by mountain sheep. Other guzzlers inspected and found in good condition were in the Kelso Peak area, Blue Springs, Chemhuevi, Piute, Last Chance, Dry Mountain in addition to the one in the Cady Mountains.
Reports on 80 small game guzzlers were received from several sources: BLM personnelm and from the Volunteers.

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THE DESERT BIGHORN COUNCIL - The First 25 years

During the sessions of the Desert Bighorn Council held at Borrego Springs this past April 1982, Warren E. Kelly presented the above titled paper concerning the Council.

Kelly noted that this was the 26th meeting of the Council--the 25th since its inception in 1957 at the 'gambling town' of Las Vegas, Nevada. A few biologists from the National Park Service, the National Forests, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and from Nevada Department of Fish and Game had met to discuss the existing knowledge related to bighorn sheep. The review of existing literature didn't take long. About the only publications of a scientific nature on desert bighorn in existence at that time was the results of John Russo's work in Southwestern Arizona during the early 1950's.

This small group of concerned men decided that information still unpublished should be gathered together and published, so that it might be available to other concerned persons. A series of annual meeting was decided upon. In 1959 a constitution and bylaws adopted, together with a statement of the purposes of the new organization. The stated objectives were to be:

1. To provide for the exchange of information...through meetings and published transactions.

2. To provide a clearing house of information among all agencies, organizations and individuals... through the appointment of work committees.

3. To stimulate and coordinate studies in all phases related to desert bighorn.

4. To function in a professional advisory capacity, where appropriate, on local, national and international questions involving the management and protections of the desert bighorn, and to adopt such measures as shall tend to promote the advancement of knowledge concerning bighorn and the long-range welfare of these animals. The underlined phrase above now appears on the letterhead of the D.B.C.

Meetings of the DBC are held during the first full week of April. These annual meeting are held in different locations each year and in diffferent states. In 1983 the site chosen is to be in Silver City, New Mexico. Twice the group has journeyed to Mexico, and on each occasion have been treated royally. One year the Director of Mexican Forestry and Wildlife presented the Council with a solid silver casting of a bighorn ram abut five to six inches in height. The year's current chairman is entrusted with valuable trophy.

On several occasions the DBC has been approached to affiliate with other organizations. However, on each occasion the DBC has voted to retain its integrity by not doing so.

During these 25 years more than 500 research papers have been presented to theCouncil. These are published annually. They form a valuable source of information for those persons interested in the things which are releated to the welfare and knowledge of the bighorn sheep of North America.

Many of the persons who have made noteworthy contributions to the knowledge of bighorn have been memorialized after their death by having a year's procedings dedicated to them.

Numerous awards have been made to persons or organizations that have made very significant contributions to bighrn sheep welfare. The Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep was a designee one year for the Water for Wildlife projects of the Society.

BIGHORN SHEEP MANAGEMENT RESOLUTION ADOPTED

During the business session of the DBC Phil Ward proposed a resolution that the State of California should restore the management of the State's bighorn sheep population to the California Department of Fish and Game under the administration of the Fish and Game Commission. The California Legislature had in the year 1873 declared the bighorn sheep a completely protected species. This act of legislation has severely handicapped the Cal. DFG in its efforts to give needed assistance to the many different herds of sheep within the state.

Efforts were made during this year of 1982 to restore this management to the DFG. The Society requested Assemblyman Gerald L. Felando to introduce the needed legislation, which was assigned to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife. It was set for its first hearing on March 31st. Here it failed its first hearing without any testimony being accepted. The Committee's Chairman Norman Waters refused to permit Dr. Loren L. Lutz, President of the Society to testify before the committee. On April 14 Assemblyman Waters refused the request for reconsideration.

Doctor Lutz has stated that efforts will be again made when the Legislature reconvenes for its sessions of 1983 -1984

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WILDLIFE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Vernon C. Bleich, Associate Wildlife Biologist for the Department of Fish and Game has sent in a report this past month of some of the activities that have transpired in some of the sheep ranges of the desert.

A temporary guzzler was installed at Old Dad Mountain. Two horizontal wells were drilled. Nine small game guzzlers and eight springs were inspected and maintained as necessary. Three big game guzzlers were inspected.

Members of the Volunteer Desert Water and Wildlife Survey contributed 22 man days of labor and 2,320 to the project during the time of this report. Much time was spent planning

for the proposed sheep capture at Old Dad Mountain. A waterhole count was made in the Old Woman Mountain.

The temporary guzzler at Old Dad Mountain was to establish sheep use at a location suitable as a site for the use of a drop net in the capture process for the proposed trapping and relocation of bighorns.

Two horizontal wells were drilled at Linden Springs in Los Angeles County, in the San Gabriel Mountains. A flow of 3.5 gallons per minute has been obtained.
NOTE: This is a significant amount of water. For example the Statue Spring in the Old Woman Mountain has been measured as two drops per minute---yet it provides water for bighorns in the area and keeps the storage tanks well supplied.

Nine springs and one small game guzzler were inspected and maintained in the Old Woman Mountains. These sites were evaluated for use by sheep and cattle, and maintenance was performed as was necessary. In this latter effort the volunteers furnished five man-days of effort and 670 miles of vehicular usage to the project.

In addition to the Statue Spring project the Surveyor Spring project tanks were found to be full and fully operational. Surveyor is on the eastern slopes of the Old Woman Mts.

Members of the Volunteer Desert Water and Wildlife Survey co nducted a waterhole count in the Old Womon Mts. A total of 44 mountain sheep were counted. During this effort, volunteers contributed 17 man-days of effort and 1,650 miles o travel to the project.

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MORE ON OLD DAD MT. TRANSPLANT PROJECT.

Dick Weaver in a phone conversation tells the editor that while the bighorns are using the water and area near the trapping site in the OldDad Mts. they just are not coming into the area under the drop net. As a result, this water trapping method has had to be dropped. Instead, an effort will be made later this fall to trap the sheep using apple pulp as the bait. The site for the introduction has been settled upon is in the Whipple Mountains which lie to the west of Parker Dam and to the North of the town of Parker on the Colorado River.

More on Old Woman Mts.

Society First Vice President Marvin Wood of Lemoore is the Team Captain for the Old Woman Mts. He has reported concerning the observations made by his team in July around the waterholes in the Old Woman Mts. As noted above, 44 sheep were counted. A team of BLM personnel observed the area around the Sheep Camp Spring on the southwestern flank of this mountain. They sighted a total of 23 sheep. However, there being a good likelihood that some duplications in the count and the fact that they had observed a total of 17 sheep at one time and in one group the decision was made to be extra conservative and list the finding as 17 sheep, of which there were four rams, nine ewes, one yearling and three lambs.
At the Dripping Spring #1 Marvin's group saw fourteen sheep of which there were five rams, seven ewes, one yearling and one lamb.
At Lone Spring (also known as Dripping Spring #3) eight ewes and three rams were counted.
At the Statue Spring only two rams were observed.
Wood also reported that the cattle now using the Old Woman Mts. have destroyed the water cathment built at the abandoned Gemco Mine Tunnel in 1972 by DFG personnel and volunteers Marvin Wood, Pete Petron and Lew Carpenter

DESERT BIGHORN RESEARCH INSTITIUTE

James DeForge the Executive Director of the above named organization reports in their July 1982 newsletter that high mortality has been occurring again this year in the Santa Rosa Mountains. He had observed that in May the lambs seemed to be playing less than usual and appeared to be more lethargic. At that time he also observed that of eight collared ewes only four of them still had lambs. A helicopter survey showed a lamb to ewe ration of only 28 lambs to 100 ewes, which is low for that ti me of year. Two of the lambs were captured and brought out of the area for treatment. This was reported in the July - August issue of T.S.

The D.B.R.I. has now received it's 501(c)(3) tax exempt status notice from the Internal Revenue Service with an identification number of 95-3700881 and has a California identification number of 1066617.

The Desert Bighorn Research Institute was formed early in 1982 by some of the members of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep who apparantly believed that the Society was not giving great enough priority to the cause of research and was not electing a large enough number of research people to the Board of Directors of the Society.

The Society has long recognized the great need for research into the cause(s) of the demise of the desert bighorns of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains herds of sheep. However, we must also recognize and appreciate that there are also other important problems and projects which place strong demands on the Society for funding. Some of these are:
1. Pursuit of the lawsuit concerning the road into sheep habitat of the San Gabriel Mountains------See page one - this issue.
2. The purchase of extremely important habitat---which if not purchased would soon become another bedroom subdivision for people moving into this desert environment ,

3. The ongoing need to provide more and more water storage facilities for the bighorns of the very dry desert areas----this is also a life or death(to the bighorns) matter.

4. The transplanting of bighorns from some areas where the range may be getting too crowded and into historic areas now devoid of any sheep population.

Society members most certainly do have high hope that Jim DeForge and his associates will be able to solve the problems associated with the loss of the lamb crops of the Santa Rosa Mountains and be able to determine how such losses may be prevented during the coming years.

CALIFORNIA BIGHORN RESEARCH COMPLETED

A four-year research project on the California bighorns in northwest nevada was completed this spring. The research was conducted my Mike Hansen as partial fulfillment for a master of science degree in wildlife management at Oregon State University, Corvallis.

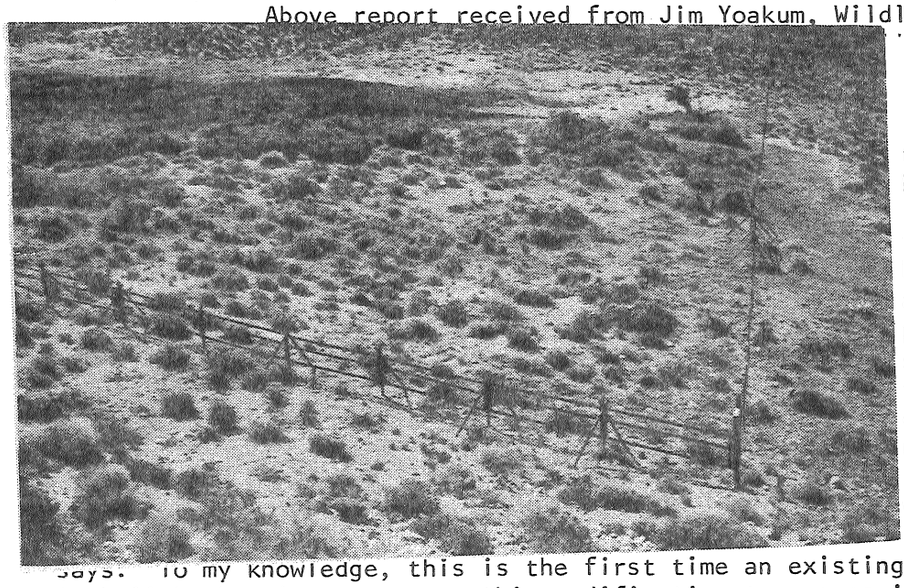
Northwest Nevada was historic habitat for California bighorns, however, they were extirpated early in this century. Then state and federal agencies cooperated to re-establish the subspecies. Hansen's research discloses the population is thriving well and suggests that a satelite herd could be established in surrounding ranges to expand the ewe/ lamb range.

Hansen's intensive research included detailed analysis of bighorns feeding habits on a 12-month basis. This is the first known in depth food habits study of this magnitude for the California bighorn. Additional food habits information was collected for antelope, deer, domestic cattle, and wild horses- all on the same rangelands, and all for the same grazing seasons. Consequently, Hansen is now completing a report documenting simularity indexes. Such base information is highly needed by range and wildlife managers.

The literature citation for Hansen's report is listed as: Hansen, M. 1982. Status and habitat preference of California Bighorn Sheep on Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, Nevada. M.S. theses, Oregon State University, Corvallis. 75p.

NOTE. Many of you who read this will be pleased to learn that Mike, the son of Pat and Chuck Hansen is also interested in the bighorns and is following in the large footsteps of his father who did much of the early and historic research on bighorn sheep at the Death Valley National Monument and elsewhere. His mother is the artist whose sketches are frequently seen in T.S.

Above report received from Jim Yoakum, Wildlife Biologist for BLM, Reno, Nevada



LAST CHANCE WATER NOW PROTECTED

In the May - June issue of T.S. there was a report of the fencing being done at the Last Chance Spring in the Last Chance Mts. At that time we had no photos of the project. Rocklin Wooley, Team Captain of area has just sent in photos of the project. The photo at the left shows one of the places where the trespassing domestic livestock did enter the spring area and which is now closed off to them by the pipe panel fencing. This improvement was designed by Tom Blankenship a DFG Biologist for this area. Wooley says: "To my knowledge, this is the first time an existing wire fence has been so modified. I shall be keeping an eye on this modification to assess is usefulness to sheep. Rocklin while there also found the remains of a small four-point mule deer buck, apparantly killes by a mountain lion.

During the DBC meeting at Santa Fe, N.M. in 1971, Jack Helvie of the US. Fish and Wildlife Service reported on his experiments with different types of fencing in order to determine how fences might be built which would give access to bighorn sheep and still exclude domestic livestock and burros. From the photo it appears that Blankenship incorporated this study of Helvie's in its construction.

FNAWS CONVENTION IN RENO IN 1983

The MGM Grand Hotel in Reno, Nevada will be the convention headquarters February 9 - 13, 1983 for the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS). More than 1,200 sportsmen, guides and outfitters, artists, game managers and people just interested in wild sheep attended the 1982 convention in New Orleans, Louisiana

The FNAWS is dedicated to the perpetuation and wise use of wild sheep throughout the world. Each year the organization raises over $200,000 and donates these funds to the management of wild sheep. A record was set this year when "Doc" D.J. Thurston of North Carolina paid $43,000 for a Rocky Mt. Bighorn tag in Wyoming. Economists would do well to note this bid price paid willingly for a wildlife species here in North America.

Each year the FNAWS commissions an artist to paint a "print/stamp" depicting a species of wild sheep. The 1982 stamp illustrates two stone sheep accomplished by Ken Carlson. Copies of the stamp sell for $5.00 and are available from Foundation for North American Wild Sheep 295 South McKnight Road, St. Paul, Minnesota 55119.

announcement courtesy Jim Yoakum--BLM, Reno, Nevada.

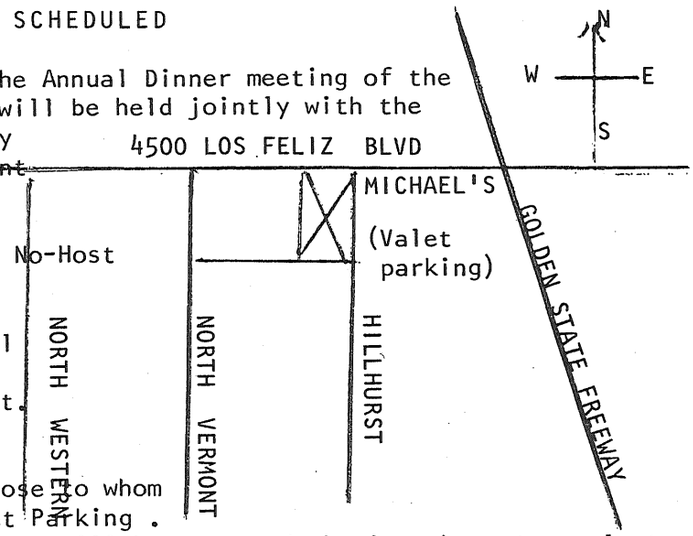
The Foundation for North American Wild Sheep spends its money for the benefits to wild sheep in many ways, some of which are: The allocation of funds to the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn sheep inorder to pursue the federal court case against the Forest Service and the Curtis Tungsten mining co. as is reported on page one this issue. FNAWS has assisted in the research expenses of the Reseach Institute in its efforts in the Santa Rosa Mts.; Last year and again this year in the construction of a water storage project in Arizona and will do so again in 1983; FNAWS will underwrite the costs of a water storage project in the Inyo Mts. of California. This project had been temporarily set for November 6th. However that being the date set for the Society's Annual Dinner the work project date has been re-set to April 23rd, 1983. PUT THIS ONE ON YOUR CALENDAR. According to the bulletin WILD SHEEP of the FNAWS this project is to be in the Nopah Mountains of southeastern Inyo County. Marvin Wood, First Vice President of the Society has been making arrangements for this project for the Society. The FNAWS has budgeted $6,650 for the project whose expenses are broken down as: three-1700 gallon storage tanks --$2,750; one float valve drinker -- $275.;15 sacks of cement-- $125; one pick up screen - $50.; 200 feet of 2 inch pipe - $400.; 100 ft of one-inch pipe - $100.; Miscellaneous plumbing fixtures - $150.; andeight hours of helicopter time at $2,800.

Some of the other projects funded by the FNAWS are: to a Wyoming study about the pinkeye infection of this past winter that caused the death of a large number of bighorns; Drs. Bunch and Glaze to further their studies concerning sinusitis and horn deformities, to Mike Hansen for his studies among the California bighorns of the Sheldon Range in Nevada. All of these have been reported on from time-to-time in The Sheepherder.

NOTE The Editor would like to suggest that if you are not now a member of the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep that you become a member. Dues are $25. annually and may be sent to the FNAWS 1147 Sheridan Ave., # 6, Cody Wyoming 82414

ANNUAL DINNER SCHEDULED

"Uncle Bud" Wiedeman has announced that the Annual Dinner meeting of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep will be held jointly with the Southern Council of Conservation Clubs Saturday evening November 6, 1982 at Michael's Restaurant 4500 Los Feliz Boulevard in Los Angeles.



The evening festvities will begin with the No-Host Refreshment hour from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Dinner will be served at 7:30 p.m. and will consist of a green salad, filet mignon steak, a baked potato and vegetable, drink and dessert. Tab for the dinner is $15. inc. tax and tip-- paid at the door.

A NO-Smoking area will be set aside for those to whom tobacco smoke is objectionable. There is Valet Parking .

At 9:00 p.m. some moving pictures and slides will be screened showing sheep transplants and preparations for the transplant from Old Dad Mts. to the Whipple Mts.

Speaker of the evening is to be Mr. E.C. "Charley" Fullerton, Director of the California Department of Fish and Game. His topic is not announced but will be timely.

There will be a few awards to be presented to some of the deserving "Sheepherders."

Return postcards are included with many of the copies of this issue of The Sheepherder. Will each of those who receive a card-- please fill it in and return--whether or not you will be present at the dinner.

DESERT PLANT DESTRUCTION BRINGS HEAVY PENALTY

So states an article inB.L.M.'s Newsbeat for September, 1982. Sheba Maria Atteberry, of Boulevard, a San Diego County community along the Mexican border, pleaded guilty to operating a vehicle in the Eastern McCain Valley Bighorn Sheep closed area, as well as charges of destroying natural features and plants of the desert when she ordered a tractor operator to construct a trailer parking pad in a restricted area.

Atteberry made her plea before U.S. Magistrate Joseph Schmitt in El Centro.

U.S. Bureau of Land Management Ranger Robert C. Magill filed criminal complaint on April 24, 1982. Affadavits from another BLM Ranger, John E. Mason, indicated Atteberry had been warned numerous times that what she was doing was a violation of law and could result in conviction with heavy fines.

BLM officials said the case was just one of a large number of cases where individuals are living free on public lands without payment of rent or taxes.

Atteberry has been fined $500.00 and placed on two years supervised probation following her guilty plea.

The Eastern McCain Valley Bighorn Sheep area is an area closed to allvehicular use.

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Note: The unlawful 'squatting' on public lands has been a thorny problem for the land managing agencies of the western states for many years. It is a problem that is difficult for the agencies to solve. It is nearly always necessary for the affected agency to go to court and obtain a formal eviction notice before itis possible to remove these persons who are unlawfully occupying these public lands.

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