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.

MAY - JUNE 1983

WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

Vernon Bleich, Associate Wildlife Biologist for the Calif. DFG in his report to the Desert Bighorn Council at Silver City, New Mexico and in his written reports demonstrates that he and his crew have been kept very busy the past many weeks in projects not only for the bighorn sheep but for other wildlife species of Southern California including work in Imperial County for waterfowl benefit, and in the newly acquired SanJacinto Wildlife Area of Riverside County. Repairs and inspection of both big game guzzlers and also small game guzzlers are made on a continuing basis.

Members of the Volunteer Desert Water and Wildlife Survey continue to do yoeman service. During this reporting period they contributed a total of 586 man-days of labor and some 52,450 miles of vehicular travel in order to do this labor. And this is all at the personal expense of the volunteers. Certainly these people are to be commended for their devotion to the wildlife resources of California.

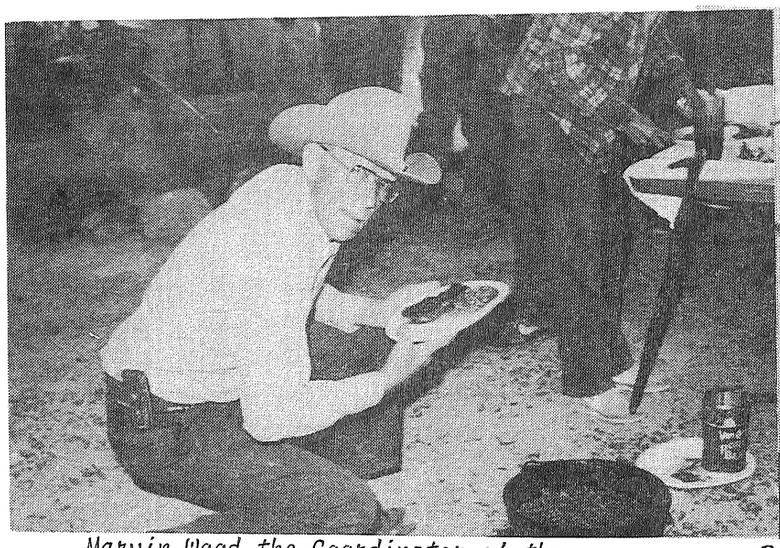
Department personnel have transported drop gate materials to the Old Dad Mountains in preparation for the trapping of sheep from that area and their introduction into the Whipple mountains. This project has had several postponments due to the exceptionally wet and rainy winter just past. This did put water all over the area and made water trapping impossible. Also the rains caused an early 'green-up' of desert vegetation and rendered the use of fermented apple pulp ineffective.

During the April reporting period there were two water storage project built in the Whipple Mountains in preparation for the transplant of sheep in that range. Each of these project have the same basic plan which consists of three- seventeen hundred gallon storage tanks connected to a small diversion dam up a ravine above the tanks and usually at a distance varying from 100 to 300 feet, but more commonly about 200 feet. From the tanks a 3/4th inch pipe leads to a float valve controlled drinking basin. The Bureau of Land Management does require that the tanks be painted a neutral grey color so that they will blend into the desert landscape.

A third water storage project was also undertaken and completed in April. This was the Nopah Mountain Project funded by the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep. Earlier this spring the FNAWS had also funded a water storage project in Arizona. Funds for these projects had been raised by a raffle drawing conducted by the FNAWS and the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep. More than $!7,000 was raised for the projcts. The Nopah project was of the same type described above. Materials for the project were ferried to the project site by helicopter on April 22nd. It had been planned that on the morning of the 23rd workers would be transported by four-wheel drive vehicules from the campsite up a bulldozed road some two and one-half miles. From there the volunteers would need to hike another mile and climb about 1,000 feet. However, a BLM Desert Ranger came to the area the morning of the 23rd and announced that the Nopah Mts. were in a Wilderness Study Area and that therefore no vehicles would be permitted to use the established roadway North of the Old Spanish Trail, even though that roadway had been used by vehicles for many years. As a result those workers who wished were transported to the project site by helicopter or they walked the whole three and one-half mile both to and from the project. All had to walk out from the project to campsite. The project was completed by early afternoon and all workers were back in camp by 4:30 p.m. During the workday the FNAWS Presidet Duane Smelser and the President-elect Tom Hinders made a helicopter flight to the North end of the Nopah range and observed one group of eight mature bighorn rams. The day before Gene Toffoli Deputy Director of Calif. DFG and Edna Maita DFG's Legislative Coordinator on a flight to the project from Southern California had observed 137 bighorns as they flew over some of the intervening mountains.

During the day there was activity around the camp area. Ron and Shirley Vickrey were busy making preparations for the bar-b-que dinner to be served to the Volunteers. Shirley is the Treasurer of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep and husband Ron ia a member of the Board of Directors. Shirley made mounds of salad and prepared dressing; Ron was busy preparing the bar-b-que pit and fire and with the cooking of four immense dutch-ovens full of baked beans. Wood for the bar-b-que had been gathered by the men of the DFG from where one of the intermittent streams had carried dead desert trees to a sink. The call for dinner was given about 5:30 p.m. Each person was given the opportunity and responsibillity for cooking his or her own New York steak provided by Project Coordinator Marvin Wood. After dinner there was music and singing and the showing of some slides about bighorns.

Volunteer workers, as usual, came from many areas. Those coming the fartherest were Duane Smelser from Chicago, Illinois and Tom Hinders from Ames, Iowa. The Southern Council of Conservation Club, as usual provided the bulk of the work force. There was a goodly number of men who came from the Phoenix, Arizona area representing the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society. Also six people came the nearly 400 miles from the San Joaquin Valley.

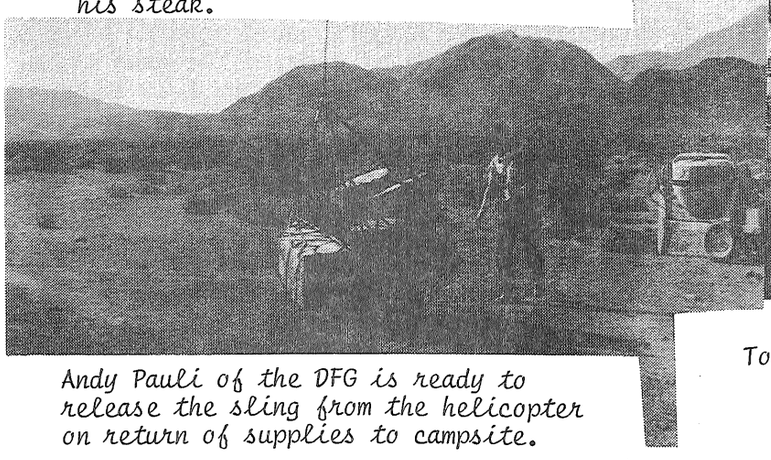


Marvin Wood the Coordinator of the Nopah Mountain project about ready to eat.

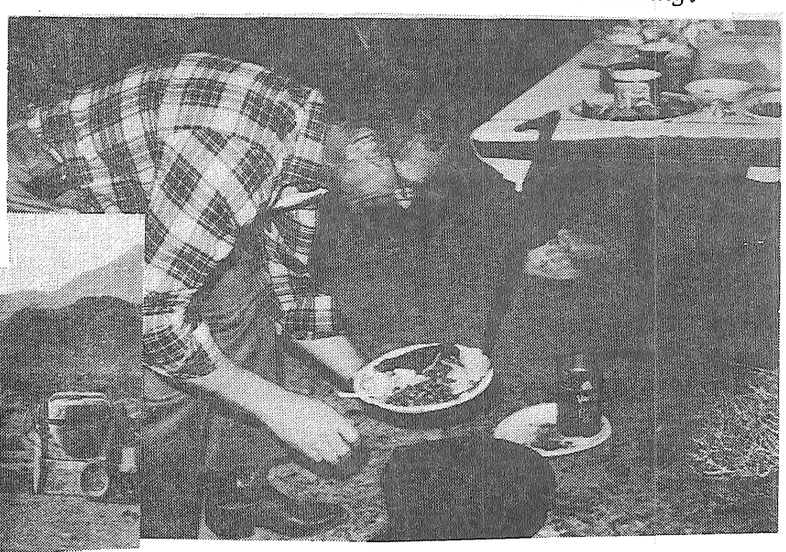
Ron and Shirley Vickrey the hard working Chefs at the Nopah Mountain Bar-B-Que

Duane Smelser, President of the FNAWS (white shirt on right) checks out his steak.

Ron Vickrey checks out the beans he is baking.



Andy Pauli of the DFG is ready to release the sling from the helicopter on return of supplies to campsite.



Tom Hinders, President-Elect of the FNAWS helps himself to a serving of baked beans.

May 7, 1983 -- IN the Inyo Mountains-- to build a burro exclosure around a very important source of water for the bighorns sheep.

May 14 & 15 in the Granite Mts. a water storage project. For particulars contact Leilani Park of the DFG, Region 5 Office---350 Golden Shore, Long Beach Calif. 90802 or phone her at (213) 590 - 5158-----or contact Glenn Sudmeier at Star Route Box 4-C, Hesperia, Ca. 92345 or phone him at (619) 389-2498 or contact Vernon Bleich atP.O. Box 1741, Hemet, Ca. 92343 , Ph. (714) 925 - 5045.

June 25, 1983 ---The Hall-of-Fame dinner sponsored by the Southern Council of Conservation Clubs at the Hacienda Hotel, 525 West Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. The dinner will honor: Frank Pachmayr, Fred Huntington, Senator "Bill" Richardson and the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep.

July 2, 3, &4, 1983 Annual waterhole count in the San Jacinto MOuntains. Sheep in these mountains have for some reason been rapidly decreasing in numbers the past several years. Please contact Dr. Loren Lutz for specifics and waterhole assignments.

Labor Day Weekend-----in Death Valley National Monument-- Informational meeting at Monument headquarters September 2nd and waterhole assignments. Conduct count through September 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1983

November 5, 1983 Annual Dinner in the Los Angeles area. To be held again at Michael's Restuarant on Los Feliz Blvd, in Los Angeles, Ca. Specifics later.

IDAHO'S SHEEP TRANSPLANTS SHOW STRONG SUCCESS

Relocation of another 31 bighorn sheep in Idaho this winter continues a Department of Fish and Game program designed to help expand their numbers by more than 1,100 in two more years.

The total of Rocky Mountain and California bighorns should stand at about 4,145 by 1985 if no hitches develop-- and the list of successful transplants since 1963 gives little reason for future doubts.

"Potential for increasing numbers and distribution of bighorns is greater than for any other big game species in Idaho," the department notes in its five-year management plan for the trophy animals.

"The major threat of our bighorns sheep management over the next decade or two will be to introduce them in as many historic habitats as we can," the plan states.

California bighorns were introduced for the first time in 1963 when 19 were transported from British Columbia to the East Fork Owyhee River. Between 1965 and 1967, British Columbia provided 31 more California bighorns for Owyhee County and this year, 12 animals were moved from the Deep Creek area to start a new herd in the West Fork Bruneau River drainage.

The Owyhee County population, limited to California bighorns only, now totals an estimated 400 -- about 10 percent of the North American Population.

Rocky Mountain bighorns account for the bulk of the sheep population, in separate herds along the Main Salmon River drainage in central Idaho areas and in some of the Hells Canyon Country.

They were reintroduced on historic range in Hells Canyon in 1975 when 13 sheep were moved to Granite Creek from the Panther Creek herd on the Main Salmon. Fifteen were added the folowing year. In 1979, seven Rocky Mountain bighorns, also from the Panther Creek herd, went to Bernard Creek range in Hells Canyon.

Other herds of Rocky Mountain bighorns were started between 1969 and 1980 in central Idaho around Mahogony Creek, Blue Dome, Long Canyon, Birch Creek and the Lost River Range. This year's transplant in the Little Lost River Range involved 19 sheep which came fromt the Whiskey Mountain population near Dubois, Wyoming.

At least through 1985, sheep for transplanting will be available to the department from Wyoming and from Idaho herds along Panther Creek, the Owyhee River and Jacks Creek drainages and possibly the East Salmon River, according to the five year plan.

"Sheep will be captured in Idaho with the use of tranquilizer darts, net guns, drop nets or corral traps and individual transport boxes will be used in most operations."

Back in Idaho history, Rocky Mountain bighorns wwre abundant in most of the mountain, canyon and rimrock habitats other than those in the northern Panhandle. But in 1900, subsistence hunting by early settlers, competition with livestock and inroads from disease had wiped out the bighorns, except for the Salmon River herds isolated in remote areas.

SHEEP MANAGEMENT BILL INTRODUCED IN CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE

On March 3, 1983 Assemblyman Frank Hill introduced his Assembly bill number 1548.

The Legislative Counsel's Digest states that: "Under existing law, bighorn sheep (*Ovis cnadensis cremnobates, O.c. Californiana, and* designate Nelson bighorn (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) as a specially protected mammal.

This bill would require the Department of Fish and Game to determine the present status and the trend of bighorn sheep populations within the state by management units, and to develop a plan for each management unit. It would provide for the adjustment in the size of a Nelson bighorn herd, upon specified conditions...."

Section 4900. states: "The Legislature declares that bighorn sheep are an important wildlife resource of the state and should be managed and maintained at optimum levels to ensure their continued existence. It is, therefore, the policy of the Legislature to encourage the preservation, restoration, and management of California's bighorn sheep population. The management shall be in accordance with the policies set forth in Section 1801, as modified by Sections 4700, 4901, and 4903 .

Section 4903 states: "If the department determines that an adjustment in the size of a Nelson bighorn herd shall benefit the status of the herd, it may submit the findings to the commission, together with an appropriate herd adjustment plan. Any such plan shall assure continued maintenance of the herd in a healthy, viable condition and prescribe the methods to be used in the adjustment program and the safeguards to be taken to prevent any undesirable impact of the program on the herd. The commission, after receiving the adjustment plan and holding a public hearing, may adopt the plan and regulation pertaining to the utilization of this resource."

AB - 1548 was heard before the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife on April 25th in Sacramento. The AB-1548 was passed by the committee on a seven to one vote. The only negative vote being registerd by Assemblyman Robert Campbell (D-Richmond).

AB-1548 will next be considered by the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. The Chairman of this committee is Assemblyman John Vasconcellos and Vice Chairman is William Leonard. In all there are 21 members of this committee on Ways and Means.

The Editor has not learned of the date set for hearing in Ways and Means.
Section 4901 deal with the survey and obtaining of data related to numbers of animals in the various herds ; their sex ratios, range conditions, competition that may exist as a result of human, livestock or burro encroachment, disease(s) parasite(s).

Those persons interested in the adoption of AB1548 should write letters of support to thier assemblymen and to the Committee.

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORNS GET NEW HOME IN UTAH

Nineteen Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep have found a new home on Bar Top Mountain near the shore of Flaming Gorge Reservoir out of Dutch John, Utah, in a part of the National Recreation Area set aside for wildlife. On January 6, the sheep were trapped from the Whiskey Mountain Bighorn Sheep Management Area on the Wind River Mountain Range in Wyoming. They were transported to the Dutch John area by Utah Division of Wildlife Resources biologists in horse trailers, then they were transferred into wooden crates for their trip to the release site 45 minutes away. (by helicopter).

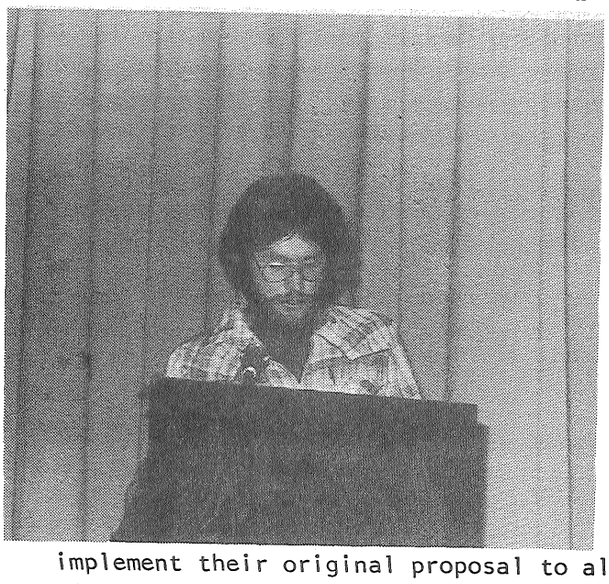
The Division expects a good herd to develop from this initial transplant of 13 female and six male sheep, most of which are young. Each sheep was collared with a numbered collar, given a dewormer to protect against lungworm, given a shot of antibiotics, and checked for nasal bacteria before being released.

The trapping project is part of Wyoming's management program to keep the number of bighorns on a critical winter range in balance with available forage. Range studies are conducted annually to determine the number of sheep to be trapped and moved. Over the last three years Utah has received a total of 69 sheep fro Wyoming. Bighorns were put on Mount Nebo in Central Utah the first two years.

Bare Top Mountain was chosen as a site for this year's transplant because it meets all the habitat needs required, and it is probably one of the last area in Utah where native sheep were found before their demise. Reasons for the die-off of wild bighorns sheep in Utah include transmission of lungworm from domestic sheep introduced onto the ranges, competition for food due to overgrazing by domestic livestock, overexploitation of sheep for food, hides, horns, etc., and other diseases such as pneumonia.

The 1982 high bid in Utah for the coveted bighorn sheep permit went to Thomas E. Phillippe, Marion, Indidana. He donated $22,500, the highest ever, to the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep and was awarded the post season hunt from November through December 31. Phillippe was guided by DWR employeee Jim Bates and USU Graduate student Mike King. Both are members of the Utah Bighorn Sheep Society. Bates stated that the very muddy hunt lasted four days and ended in Pocket Canyon with Phillippe taking a 7½ year old ram scoring 151 points. The 1981 hunt permit went to Dr. Richard Burnside of Alabama for a $22,000 donation and the prior year (the first year a permit was made available) it went to Fred Morris of Salt Lake City for a $20,000. donation. Morris was guided by Carl Mahon, of the Bureau of Land Management.

FERAL BURRO __ UPDATE



Steven D. Kovach, Chairman of the Burro Committee for the Dewrt Bighorn Council reported in early April at Silver City, New Mexico concerning the present status of the feral burros of the southwestern states. Steve noted that..."in general, this year's news has much more good than bad news, things are improving, that is if you do not like free ranging burros.

There is no real change in the State of Nevada from a year ago. Burros are not a problem in or immediately adjacent to bighorn ranges. Some removals were proposed last year primarily for vegetation rehabilitation projects, however.

In New Mexico finally something is happening with the situation at Bandelier National Monument. In early 1983 the Courts decided in favor of the National Park Service and has allowed the NPS to implement their original proposal to allow the Fund for Animals to roundup all the burros that they can, or when it is no longer economically feasible, then the NPS will shoot what are left. Fund for Animals will have 60 days beginning in late April to complete its capture efforts.

In Arizona between late April 1982 and September 1982 the Bureau of Land Manaement removed 500 burros, primarily from the Black Mountains outside of Kingman. During fiscal Year '83 to date 55 burros have been removed. The goal for the year is removal of 600 to 650 burros from the Black Mts. and from the Arizona Strip. They have become a problem in the latter area. The NPS reports that no burros have been sighted in Grand Canyon during the past year.

In California during this current fiscal year(beginning October1, 1982) the BLM crews have removed 500 burros from the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) This removal is to continue. BLM personnel believe that if adequate funding comes from the Congress that all of the burro removals called for in the management plan will be achieved. Current removal efforts are being concentrated on BLM lands surrounding the China Lake Naval Weapons Center and Fort Irwin. Recent censuses conducted along the California side of the Colorado River indicated a significant drop in burro numbers. Poaching and removal efforts by the Arizona BLM are believed responsible for the reduced numbers.

Plans for Death Valley National Monument are moving right along. The final Environmental Impact Statemento was released in November 1982 and approved by NPS and Interior officials on February 19, 1983. The option selected calls for burro removals in a three year effort of concentrated live captures starting this coming October. Captured burros will be transported to Ridgecrest where they will be turned over to animal protection groups for branding, veterinary inspections and adoption by individuals.

Up until the census of August 1982 the burros of D.V.N.M. were increasing at a rate of 15%. The last census showed the numbers remaing at the 2500 mark. The reason for the no change in numbers is that many burros have migrated from the D.V.N.M. To the area of China Lake where some of them that had been captured in Death Valley and had collars and radios installed on them had been now captured in China LakeNaval Weapons lands.

Since March 1980 a total of 5,329 burros have been removed from from Naval Weapons Center lands. The Navy has also taken 221 feral horses off its lands and now finds the horse population standing at about 375. Further efforts on the Naval base are being handicapped by a ruling sought by a Mr. James Capp who charged that the use of helicopters over Naval lands was in violation of congressional Acts of 1959 and 1971 The Department of Defense was not mentioned in the Act which gave the Secretary of Interior the right to use helicopters in capture of feral horses and burros.

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HALL OF FAME DINNER JUNE 25, 1983

The Southern Council of Conservation Clubs is staging their HALL OF FAME dinner the evening of June 25th at the Hacienda Hotel at 525 West Sepulveda Boulevard, in Los Angeles California. This Hacienda Hotel is near the Los Angeles International Airport.

To be honored during this Hall of Fame dinner are: Senator H.L. "Bill" Richardson, Frank Pachmayr, Fred Huntington and the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep.

The Southern Council of Conservation Clubs has long been recognized as a leading organization of Sportsmen-Conservationists. They have furnished much of the leadership in the statewide California Wildlife Federation. They have been consistent backers of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep in the more than thirty water storage projects built during the past twelve years.

The Southern Council of Conservation Clubs has earned the loyal support of the members of the sheep society, both in attendance and also in the support of their fund raising efforts.

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STONE SHEEP RESEARCH

Fred Bunnell writing in Western Guidlines reports that..."For the past three years we have been studying Stone's sheep on burned and unburned range in the Toad River and Magnum Creek areas. The sheep made extensive use of available burns, particularly in the spring when new grass begins to grow. During that time sheep without access to burns are found at low elevations in natural clearings such as rockslides. We wanted to document whether sheep on burned ranges reproduced better, and whether they needed to spend less time foraging to obtain the needed nutition. If less ti me was required, the animals would be in better condition.

At first sight, burned spring ranges appear vastly superior to natural clearings. The amount of new grass growing in May is almost 10 times greater than on unburned ranges." However, the difference in food abundance did not change the amount of time spent feeding on either the burned or unburned ranges. The new spring production of grasses were equally nutritious on the tested ranges.

In summer all sheep move to higher elevations which allows them to continue feeding on nutritious new growth. The grasses and sedges eaten by sheep at higher elevations in July contained 14 to 15 percent protein. By that time the grasses on the lower ranges (burned), has matured somewhat and protein content has declined to about nine or ten percent.

Winter is the critical time of year for most sheep. They use high windswept ridges and Stone's sheep consume large amounts of sparse sedge and lichens. The more abundant food at lower elevations is snow covered and is unavailable, whether the range had been burned or not.

"Only one burned slope in our study area was windswept and available for winter range. Sheep using that area had much lower levels of lungworms(38 larvae per gram of feces) than sheep using the alpine ridges(417 larvae per gram of feces). Fire may have reduced the number of snails, the lungworm's alternate host. Sheep using the burned winter range also had much higher lam/ewe ratios (50 to70 lambs per 100 ewes) than sheep forced to winter in the alpine (18 to 27 lambs per 100 ewes)."

"Overall, it appears that range burning benefits Stone's sheep primarily where the burns are windswept in the winter. Although our analyses are incomplete, they suggest future burning should be directed to creating winter range rather than spring range. Benefits from additional range appear to be significant."

WESTERN GUIDLINES--February 1983---Guide-Outfitters Association of British Columbia.

SAN GABRIEL BIGHORN SHEEP CENSUS HAMPERED BY FOG

Two hundred and thirty-nine bighorns were tallied over the weekend (March 12 & 13) during a fog-hampered count of the San Gabriel Mountain population by state and federal agency personnel and more than 35 volunteers.

"This is a preliminary analysis and will probably change somewhat when the figures are refined", Said Marti Pletcher, the Department of Fish and Game biologist who headed the annual census.

The 1983 count was only about half the 502 reported in 1982, but Pletcher said that the snow cover was poor and many of the bighorns were apparantly on summer ranges and more spread out than usual. Also, many sheep were probably missed in the fog.

Pletcher said the lamb to ewe ratio of 21: 100 could be considered satisfactory and just about what was expected. Last year it was 26:100.

The annual tally of the San Gabriel bighorn sheep population is part of the department's continuing effort to maintain the Nelson bighorns of the San Gabriels in a remnant of their former range. Although the Nelson subspecies is not classed as rare by the state, as are the other two subspecies--- the California and the Peninsular--, its habitat is threatened by human intrusion.

Nonetheless, the Nelsons of the San Gabriels are the largest single concentration of bighorns in California.

Pletcher said the count took place in two stagees.

Saturday, observers from the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests and Pletcher spent six hours in the air over the San Gabriel Wilderness area.

Sunday, they were joined on the ground by 35 voluntbers, including a number of members of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep .

The annual sheep count is funded by the National Forest Service and the Los Angeles County Fish and Game Commission in cooperation with the Department of Fish and Game.

Pletcher said that on Sunday volunteers were stationed at observation points along the canyons leading into the San Gabriel and Lytle Creek Canyons. For the volunteers, it entailed hikes of as long as nine miles into extremely rugged country. She said that day-long fog conditions may have hampered their efforts to get truly reliable numbers.

Press Release---California Department of Fish and Game-March 14,1983

LOS PADRES N.F. EXPLORES BIGHORN REINTRODUCTION

The Los Padres National Forest Wildlife Biologist Maeton Freel is exploring the possibilities of reintroducing bighorn sheep into the historic habitat of that forest. The last recorded sighting of Nelson bighorn sheep on the forest occured sometime between 1912 and 1915. Like in other areas it has been theorized that a combination of illegal hunting, disease from domestic sheep and competition from domestic livestock probably resulted in the complete loss of sheep within the forest boundaries. These sheep were apparantly geographically isolated from the nearest herds to teh south in the San Gabriel Mountains; therefore, reinvasion of the existing habitat has not occured. The present study will attempt to provide insight into the feasibility of reintroducing sheep through a comparison of some existing habitat in the Los Padres National Forest with that in the Angeles and the San Bernardino National Forests which presently supports Nelson bighorn sheep.

Available range literature indicates that there are several areas within mountainous areas in the Ojai and Mt. Pinos Ranger Districts and parts of the Santa Barbara and Santa Lucia Ranger Districts that were historic bighorn ranges. In all there are some 137,000 acres which may be suitable for such reintroductions. This area takes in Alamo Mtn,, Cobblestone Mtn., McDonald Peak, STewart Mtn., Snowy Peak, Black Mtn., the White Mtns., Topa Topa Peak, Whiteacre Peak and Hopper Mtn. included within the area is the Sespe Condor Sanctuary. This area has been devoid of domestic sheep for several decades and has retained much of its previous remoteness from human disturbance. Elevations range in general from about 3,000 feet to 6,000 feet above sea level. The greater pa rt of the study area is within a ~~high~~ high fire hazard situation and could be expected to burn within the next 10 to 20 years either through prescription or more likely wildfire. Once burned, the area would meet the fire history criteria. Mineral licks are essentially unknown in the area . Water seems fairly abu ndant throughout the study area. Roads and trails do not seem to pose a prticular threat by allowing disturbing-human activities to occur. Roads are presently near the perimeters of some winter range units, and widespread human activities are quite restricted.

Studies for future analysis will include: Available escape terrain; quality of winter range vegetation including density;
presence of mineral licks;adequacy of potential summer range; additional water sources and herd capacities for the available habitat. Also there must be considered the involvement of the Forest SErvice, Department of Fish and Game and private organizations in the reintroduction process; the potential conflict(s) with oil and gas or other mineral development, how can such a project be funded? These possible problems must be resolved, among others.

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DESERT BIGHORN COUNCIL EWES ARE BUSY

Doris Weaver, Chairman of the Desert Bighorn Council Ewes and Scholarship recipient Bill Burger.

The wives and ladyfreinds of Desert Bighorn have formed a group termed "Desert Bighorn Ewes". During the Annual Meetings of the DBC these ladies sell various types of art work, much of which they have themselves made or have had made to special order for their use. These items range from T-shirts, to stationery, bolo ties and jewelry. The profits go in part to the Chuck Hansen Memorial Fund and part of it is used as Scholarships to deserving University students that are majoring in Wildlife Management. This year the Chuck Hansen Memorial Fund was enriched by $110.00 and also a $200.00 Scholarship was awarded to Bill Burger a Masters Candidate at the Humbolt State University in Arcata, California. Burger had presented his first paper to the DBC this year -- titled "Movement and Habitat Utilization of Desert Bighorn Sheep in the Las Vegas and Sheep Mountain Ranges, Nevada--a preliminary report. Burger does show promise.

BIGHORN SHEEP--SIERRA NEVADAS

A census of the Mt. Williamson herd of California bighorn sheep was completed recently. Aside from re-introduced populations, the Williamson herd is one of only two remaining populations in the Sierras. The last reliable census was done in 1978, when 30 sheep were seen. The recent (Feb. '83) also tallied only 30 animals.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: During discussion concerning the formation of the John Muir Wilderness the Sierra Club gave as one of their objectives the preservation and protection of the bighorn sheep of the Mt. Williamson and Mt. Baxter areas. Yet the cli mbing of Mt. Williamson remains as one of the recommended mountains to climb by S.C. members. This inspite of the Stated objectives of the Sierra Club.

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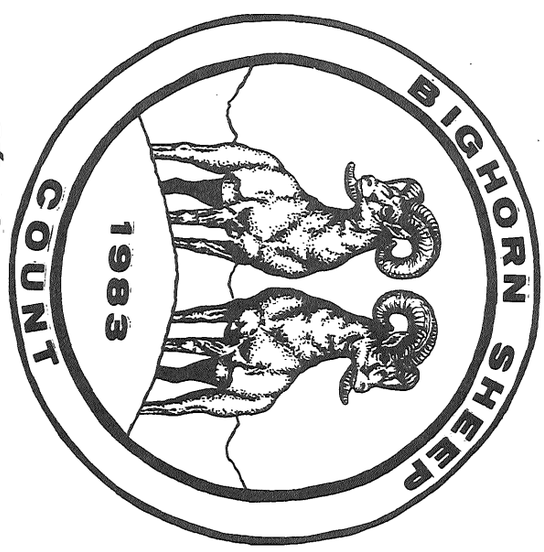
T-Shirt orders must be received by June 10 →



anza-borrego desert state park

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February was a very busy month for the Volunteer Desert Water and Wildlife Survey and the personnel from the California Department of Fish and Game. Vernon C. Bleich the Project Leader reports in his report of February 1983.

Plumbing repairs were completed at the Camp Cady Wildlife Area. Two big game guzzlers were inspected and two big game guzzlers were constructed. Three natural water sources were inspected and maintained as needed. Major mainenance was performed on eight small game guzzlers.
Twenty thou sand pounds of ANFO explosives were detonated on the Cibola National Wildlife Refuge, a major waterfowl habitat improvement project.
Members of the Volunteer Desert Water and Wildlife Survey contribute 261 man-days of labor and 12,968 vehicle miles to the project during this report period. In addition, the Bureau of Land Management supplied about $7,000 worth of materials and helicopter time for the for the construction of one big game guzzler.

Project personnel selected final sites for the new Orocopia and Chuckwalla big game guzzlers.

A 4,500 gallon catchment was installed in the Cady Mountains, San Bernardino County. Two hundred and twenty feet of 2" galvanized pipe was installed to divert storm runoff into a series of three water storage tanks. This project is located to provide mountain sheep inhabiting the Cady Mountains with a perennial water source in the central portion of the range.

A 5,100 gallon water storage catchment was installed in the Orocopia Mountins, Riverside County. This is a rain apron type catchment, and the collecting surface is of Hypalon, and measures 40 x 60 feet. This is located in an area heavily used by mountain sheep, and should serve to decrease the dependency of this sheep population on the Coachella Canal.

Project personnel inspected the Old Dad Peak Big Game Guzzler, and found it to be 100% full and operating normally.
Project personnel inspected the South I - 40 big game guzzler and found it to be operating normally. Twelvemountain sheep were seen about one mile south of the drinker.

Project personnel sugout the catchment at Lower Dad Spring, to make water accessible to wildlife.

POTHOLE DEVELOPEMENT. Project personnel assisted the USF& W Service with a major waterfowl habitat improvement project at Cibola National Wildlife Refuge, Imperial County. 20,000 pounds of ANFO explosives were detonated, and an additional 20,000 lbs. will be used before the project is completed. Work accomplished this far before the project is completed has resulted in the construction of a channel approximately 10 feet deep, 30 f-et wide and 3,000 feet long.

Again, as in each of the previous some eight moths Bleich and his crew have been badly handicapped by breakdowns of the old and wornout Jeep vehicles neaded to get around in the desert areas.

Department personnel and the Volunteers are to be congratulated for an impressive amount of their joint labors.

From the report of VernonC. Bleich under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration for month of February 1983.

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Vernon C. Bleich, California Department of Fish and Game's hard working Associate Wildlife Biologist for the desert areas of Southern California makes a report to the Desert Bighorn Council in Silver City, N.M.

Bighorn Sheep Count '83 T-Shirts are on the way !!!!

On the other side is the design for this year's Bighorn Sheep Count T-Shirt. The printing will be brown & the shirt color choices are: white with green trim, light blue, and tan. All orders must be received no later than June 10. The shirts will be mailed out around July 1, so for those of you participating you will have your shirt in time for the count. Please complete the order form below and enclose your check for the full amount.

Thank-you!

ADULT (blue, tan, white)

S	
M	
L	
XL	

CHILD (blue, tan, white)

S	(6-8)
M	(10-12)
L	(14-16)

State quantities in boxes

price per shirt $8.49
tax per shirt .51
shipping per shirt 1.00
total per shirt $10.00

Total # shirts ordered ____
Total Amount enclosed ____

Send order to:
Sandy Strause
PO Box 1022
Borrego Springs, CA 92004

Name ____
Address ____
City/State ____
Zip Code ____