



Wild Sheep Foundation

Conservation Strategy 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

The WSF Conservation Strategy is our most important document. It outlines the very fabric of our combined Vision, Purpose, and Mission, and it prioritizes how we will apply our resources to help wild sheep conservation and management, worldwide.

This is a dynamic, draft plan outlining the top strategic goals, objectives and tasks for an ongoing path that is practical, necessary, and crafted to be achievable. By applying the following goal-driven approach in implementing this **WSF Conservation Strategy**, WSF can move toward being the best managed, most respected, and most influential conservation organization in the world.

1.1. Functional Area

North American Caprinae Conservation [Goal Champion: Jack Atcheson, Jr., Conservation Committee Chair]

1.2. Strategic Goal

North American Caprinae populations and their habitats are effectively managed, accessible, utilized, and supported by interested stakeholders.

1.3. Species/Subspecies Covered

Stone's Sheep	Desert Bighorn Sheep
Dall's Sheep	Rocky Mountain Goat
Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep	Muskoxen

2. CURRENT STATUS

2.1. Stone's Sheep

Present estimates suggest there are < 14,500 Stone's sheep in British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. There are no current comprehensive management plans in place. Seasonal distribution and crucial habitat mapping is vague, as are measures to protect migration corridors and wintering and lambing areas. The WSF Thinkhorn Sheep Summit in April 2014 was the most comprehensive effort to date, to connect interested stakeholders.

Stone's Sheep Population & Harvest Trends (WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group estimates)

1990- 14,500	466♂
2000- 14,000	278♂
2010- 12,900	333♂
2015- 14,500	???

2.2. Dall's Sheep

Present estimates suggest there are 80,000-100,000 Dall's sheep in Alaska, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and northern British Columbia. There are no current comprehensive management plans in place. Seasonal distribution and crucial habitat mapping is vague, as are measures to protect migration corridors and wintering and lambing areas. The WSF Thinhorn Sheep Summit in April 2014 was the most comprehensive effort to date, to connect interested stakeholders.

Dall's Sheep Population & Harvest Trends (WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group estimates)

1990- 108,000	1914♂
2000- 101,500	1148♂
2010- 96,000	1161♂
2015- ?????	????♂

2.3. Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep (includes CA BHS)

Present estimates suggest there are ~48,000 Rocky Mountain/California bighorn sheep in 14 U.S. states (ND, SD, NE, MT, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, ID, NV, WA, OR, CA) and 2 Canadian provinces (AB, BC).

Bighorn Sheep Population & Harvest Trends (WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group estimates)

1990- 43,675	858♂
2000- 46,295	835♂
2010- 48,600	967♂
2015- 48,000	???

2.4. Desert Bighorn Sheep

Present estimates suggest there are ~39,000 desert BHS in 7 U.S. states (AZ, CA, CO, NV, NM, TX, UT) and 6 states in Mexico (Baja California, Baja California Sur, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Nuevo Leon).

Desert Sheep Population & Harvest Trends (WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group estimates)

1990- 22,525	266♂
2000- 26,050	330♂
2010- 29,145*	451♂
2015- ?????	???

*includes 5,000+ desert BHS in Sonora, per personal communication with Alejandro Morales, AGADES, Sonora

2.5. Rocky Mountain Goat

Present estimates suggest there are more than 100,000 Rocky Mountain Goats in 11 U. S. states (AK, WA, OR, NV, ID, MT, WY, CO, UT, SD) and 4 Canada provinces/territories (AB, BC, YK, NWT).

Rocky Mountain Goat Harvest* Trends (Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council 2010).

1970-	539
1980-	1494
1990-	2065
2000-	1738
2009-	1740

*This harvest total includes both ♂ and ♀ female goats; ♀ harvest is ~25% of annual harvest.

2.6. Muskoxen:

Present estimates suggest there are more than 136,000 Muskoxen in Canada (120,000), Greenland (12,300), and Alaska (4,000)

Muskoxen Harvest Trend = <3000 per year

3. OVERALL CONSERVATION STRATEGIES FOR WILD SHEEP IN NORTH AMERICA

3.1 Develop WSF Conservation Teams for Stone's sheep, Dall's sheep, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and desert bighorn sheep. Populate those teams with a blend of wild sheep conservation organization volunteers + willing agency personnel.

3.2 Focused Priorities. WSF Conservation, Legislative Affairs, and PRAB Committees, WSF BOD, plus participating WSF Chapters and Affiliates and agency partners, are all focused on core priorities.

3.3 Membership. Composition of these WSF committees/conservation staffers/volunteers must be populated to direct their skills at achieving these goals.

3.4 Funding to Achieve Goals. Grant-in-Aid funding, WSF conservation actions, earmarked projects, scholarship and legislative efforts should be geared to achieve and strengthen WSF Conservation Strategy core priorities.

3.5 Thinhorn Sheep

3.5.1. (Overall) Thinhorn Sheep Strategic Objective 1

The following eight (8) priority action items common to all jurisdictions were identified at the 2014 Thinhorn Summit and require continued effort.

3.5.1.1. Develop a comprehensive management plan for Thinhorn, where needed.

- 3.5.1.2. Develop legislative/restrictions/regulations to prevent contact between domestic sheep and goats and thinhorn sheep, to avoid risk of disease transmission.
- 3.5.1.3. Develop access management plans for motorized use (i.e. ATV, OHV, helicopter, etc.) development and enforce regulations on access/travel management.
- 3.5.1.4. Build trust, partnerships and awareness with all user groups to improve communication and collaboration.
- 3.5.1.5. Refine thinhorn sheep habitat maps.
- 3.5.1.6. Develop and implement predator management plans.
- 3.5.1.7. Protect critical thinhorn habitat.
- 3.5.1.8. Development and implement habitat enhancement plans.

3.5.2. (Overall) Thinhorn Sheep Strategic Objective 2

By 2020, have at least 120,000 thinhorn sheep in Alaska, northern British Columbia, Yukon Territory, and Northwest Territories. Increase Dall's sheep and Stone's sheep populations by 10% each.

3.5.3. (Overall) Thinhorn Sheep Strategic Objective 3

By 2020, increase resident and non-resident hunting opportunity and ram harvest by 10% above 2010 levels by working collaboratively with WSF Chapters & Affiliates, wild sheep management agencies, and other interested parties.

3.5.4. (Overall) Thinhorn Sheep Strategic Objective 4

By 2015, encourage completion of a Thinhorn Sheep Conservation Strategy by the WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group. Encourage adoption by WAFWA Directors in 2015. Distribute the WAFWA Thinhorn Sheep Conservation Strategy and WSF Thinhorn Summit Synthesis and Strategy to interested stakeholders.

3.5.5. (Overall) Thinhorn Sheep Strategic Objective 5

Conduct 2nd WSF Thinhorn Sheep Summit in 2017.

3.6 Stone's Sheep Strategic Objective

By 2020, strive to have at least 16,000 Stone's sheep in British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, and increase resident and non-resident hunting opportunity and ram harvest by 10% above 2010 levels.

3.6.1. Stone's Sheep Tasks/Strategies (Most were identified during the WSF 2014 Thinhorn Sheep Summit)

- 3.6.1.1. Develop WSF Stone's Sheep Conservation Team(s) in BC and YT and appoint a WSF Team Lead
- 3.6.1.2. Team Lead assigns responsibilities and timelines to WSF staff/volunteers for accomplishing tasks
- 3.6.1.3. Develop working relationships with key Government and NGOs in each jurisdiction including establishing a contact directory/database of Stone's sheep stakeholders
- 3.6.1.4. Build trust, partnerships, and awareness with Stone's sheep stakeholders to improve communication and collaboration
- 3.6.1.6 WSF Stone's Sheep Team reviews and refines Strategic Objectives
- 3.6.1.7. Solicit WSF, Chapter and Affiliate Stone's sheep input/priorities
- 3.6.1.8. Solicit WSF, Chapters and Affiliates and partners on potential collaborative \$ for Stone's sheep needs
- 3.6.1.8. Determine WSF annual \$ potential investment into Stone's sheep conservation/management
- 3.6.1.9. Determine and adequately budget WSF resources to assist Stone's sheep management agencies to conduct and complete Stone's sheep comprehensive management plans in BC and YT by end of CY2017
- 3.6.1.10. Determine and assist with \$ for periodic required/desired surveys
- 3.6.1.11. Encourage complete inventory/surveys in all areas
- 3.6.1.12. Encourage development and maintenance of reliable Stone's sheep distribution maps. Outfitter and hunter observation forms will be of great value in this effort.
- 3.6.1.13. Undertake campaign to educate public about Stone's sheep, including threats and management challenges
- 3.6.1.14. Encourage Disease Prevention/Response Plans in involved jurisdictions
- 3.6.1.15. Encourage legislation/restrictions/regulations to prevent contact between domestic sheep and goats and Stone's sheep, to avoid risk of disease transmission.
- 3.6.1.16. Ensure core habitat protection policies are in place for all Stone's sheep habitat including access management plans for motorized use develop and enforce regulations on access/travel management.
- 3.6.1.17. Protect critical habitats such as migration corridors, lambing and winter range.

- 3.6.1.18. Promote development of strategic prescribed burning and/or noxious weed programs to enhance Stone's sheep habitat.
- 3.6.1.19. Determine which predators are having an impact on Stone's sheep, identify thresholds that trigger management actions, and identify and implement different methods of control.
- 3.6.1.20. Establish Stone's sheep centralized database that can be updated from multiple locations

3.7. Dall's Sheep Strategic Objective

By 2020, strive to have at least 110,000 Dall's sheep in Alaska, northern British Columbia, Yukon Territory, and Northwest Territories, and increase resident and non-resident hunting opportunity and ram harvest by 10% above 2010 levels.

3.7.1. Dall's Sheep Tasks/Strategies (Most were identified during the WSF 2014 Thinhorn Sheep Summit)

- 3.7.1.1. Develop WSF Dall's Sheep Conservation Team(s) in AK, BC, YT, NWT, and appoint a WSF Team Lead
- 3.7.1.2. Team Lead assigns responsibilities and timelines to WSF staff/volunteers for accomplishing tasks
- 3.7.1.3. Develop working relationships with key Government and NGOs in each jurisdiction including establishing a contact directory/database of Dall's sheep stakeholders
- 3.7.1.4. Build trust, partnerships, and awareness with Dall's sheep stakeholder groups to improve communication and collaboration
- 3.7.1.5. WSF Dall's Sheep Team reviews and refines Strategic Objectives
- 3.7.1.6. Solicit WSF, Chapter and Affiliate Dall's sheep input/priorities
- 3.7.1.7. Solicit WSF, Chapters and Affiliates and partners on potential collaborative \$ for Dall's sheep needs
- 3.7.1.8. Determine WSF annual \$ potential investment into Dall's sheep conservation/management
- 3.7.1.9. Determine and adequately budget WSF resources to assist Dall's sheep management agencies to conduct and complete Dall's sheep comprehensive management plans in AK, BC, YT, and NWT by end of CY2017
- 3.7.1.10. Determine and assist with \$ for periodic required/desired surveys
- 3.7.1.11. Encourage complete inventory/surveys in all areas
- 3.7.1.12. Encourage development and maintenance of reliable Dall's sheep distribution maps. Outfitter and hunter observation forms will be of great value in this effort.
- 3.7.1.13. Undertake campaign to educate public about Dall's sheep, including threats and management challenges

- 3.7.1.14. Encourage Disease Prevention/Response Plans in involved jurisdictions
- 3.7.1.15. Encourage legislation/restrictions/regulations to prevent contact between domestic sheep and goats and Dall's sheep, to avoid risk of disease transmission.
- 3.7.1.16. Ensure core habitat protection policies are in place for all Dall's sheep habitat including access management plans for motorized use develop and enforce regulations on access/travel management.
- 3.7.1.17. Protect critical habitats such as migration corridors, lambing and winter range.
- 3.7.1.18. Promote development of strategic prescribed burning and/or noxious weed programs to enhance Dall's sheep habitat.
- 3.7.1.19. Determine which predators are having an impact on Dall's sheep, identify thresholds that trigger management actions, and identify and implement different methods of control.
- 3.7.1.20. Establish Dall's sheep centralized database that can be updated from multiple locations

3.7.2. Tasks Underway

As an outcome of the WSF 2014 Thinhorn Sheep Summit, Jeremy Ayotte, coordinator for the BC Sheep Separation Program, was hired by WSF August 1, 2014 (11-month contract, initially using proceeds from THS Summit, then supplemented via the Kevin & Janine Rinke TH Initiative \$) to help move forward on effective temporal and spatial separation between domestic sheep/goats and thinhorn sheep. Monthly activity reports have been submitted since October 2014, and have been edited, then forwarded to THS stakeholder group by Kevin Hurley. Jeremy Ayotte was primarily tasked with:

- a. Helping develop legislation/restrictions/regulations to prevent contact between domestic sheep and goats and THS, to avoid risk of disease transmission
- b. Pursue implementation of high priority topics identified during April 2014 WSF THS Summit
- c. Coordinate multi-party information flow, publications, maps, brochures, web-links, and other resources to assist each jurisdiction in developing regulatory actions
- d. Where applicable, generate and/or review written summaries, position papers, "white papers", legislative summaries, legal briefs, By-Laws, covenants, regulations and other pertinent materials re this topic
 - i. Insure that all jurisdictions have assistance for, access to, and understanding of legislative and/or regulatory requirements

Jeremy Ayotte reports the Yukon Territory efforts of a resolution drafted by Dan Reynolds and unanimously adopted during the Renewal Resources Council Annual General Workshop (AGW). Resolution will be vetted by Government.

AK WSF Tasks Progress in Alaska

Committed to restart the organization in Alaska at Chapters and Affiliates Meeting in June 2014

Re-established WSF in Alaska as the Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation, established By Laws, adopted Ethics Policy, EIN, bank accounts, business licenses, etc

Registered as non-profit corporation Dec 2015, charter was formally approved by WSF in Jan 2016 as with Alaska as fully aligned chapter.

Membership continues to grow – should achieve 200 by end of year – published first news letter and provided update for inclusion in WSF magazine

Testified before the Alaska Board of Game – Alaska’s regulations making body – on sheep hunting issues – adopted the “Speaking with one voice” policy with WSF – letter to BOG was co-signed with WSF

Developed broad support for the re-writing of Alaska Dall’s Sheep Management Plans consistent with the Thinhorn Priorities

Accepted an invitation to join the Alaska Legislative Outdoor Caucus Advisory Council – designed to provide conservation information and recommendations to Alaska Legislators

Met regularly with the Deputy Director of the Division of Wildlife Management of Alaska Department of Fish and Game to discuss Dall’s sheep Issues – continuing to develop professional relationships

Engaged other conservation and hunting organizations - provided information brief to SCI and held discussions with several others, APHA, AOC, etc.

Submitted request for Alaska Special Big Game Permits for Auction / Raffle – under the new regulation requesting organization must be non-profit corporation registered in Alaska – we retain 30% funds to direct toward sheep priorities

Completing an agreement with ADSF&G to provide financial support to re-write Management Plans over the next year – will continue to monitor progress and provide input to the plans

Laid the ground work for two sub-chapters in Alaska and began fund raising activities with raffles – will conduct chapter events next year – new style organization with state level organization and multiple sub-chapters

Next major project is the Disease Prevention Program – basic plan of attack developed, now seeking buy-in from stake holders and financial support to facilitate an incremental execution

Bighorn Sheep

3.7.3. (Overall) Bighorn Sheep Strategic Objective 1

By 2020, have at least 95,000 bighorn sheep in 15 western states, 2 Canadian provinces, and 6 states in Mexico. Increase RMBS and desert BHS populations by 10% each.

3.7.4. (Overall) Bighorn Sheep Strategic Objective 2

Establish an annual translocation goal to move 500 animals across bighorn ranges by working collaboratively with all WSF Chapters & Affiliates, wild sheep management agencies, and other interested parties.

3.7.5. (Overall) Bighorn Sheep Strategic Objective 3

By 2020, increase resident and non-resident hunting opportunity and ram and ewe harvest by 10% above 2010 levels by working collaboratively with WSF Chapters & Affiliates, wild sheep management agencies, and other interested parties.

3.7.6. Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Tasks/Strategies

3.7.6.1. Develop WSF RMBS Conservation Team, and appoint a WSF Team Lead for U.S. and Canada

3.7.6.2. Develop working relationships with key Government and NGO persons in each jurisdiction including establishing a contact directory/database of RMBS stakeholders

3.7.6.3. Build trust, partnerships, and awareness with RMBS stakeholder groups to improve communication and collaboration

3.7.6.4. WSF Team reviews and refines Strategic Objectives

3.7.6.5. Solicit WSF, Chapter and Affiliate Annual Plan Input/Priorities

3.7.6.6. Team Lead assigns responsibilities and timelines to WSF staff/volunteers for accomplishing tasks

3.7.6.7. Solicit WSF, Chapter and Affiliate potential collaborative \$

3.7.6.8. Work with Government Agencies in appropriate jurisdictions to update / create comprehensive RMBS management plans

3.7.6.9. Establish centralized database that can be updated from multiple locations

3.7.6.10. Establish mechanism to share ideas and best practices – centralized database

3.7.6.11. Encourage development and maintenance of reliable RMBS distribution maps

- 3.7.6.12. Encourage complete inventory/surveys in all areas
- 3.7.6.13. Determine and assist with \$ for periodic required/desired surveys
- 3.7.6.14. Undertake campaign to educate public about RMBS, including threats and management challenges
- 3.7.6.15. Encourage Disease Prevention/Response Plans in all Jurisdictions
- 3.7.6.16. Encourage legislation/restrictions/regulations to prevent contact between domestic sheep and goats and RMBS, to avoid risk of disease transmission.
- 3.7.6.17. Ensure core habitat protection policies are in place for all RMBS habitat including access management plans for motorized use develop and enforce regulations on access/travel management. Protect critical habitats such as migration corridors, lambing and winter range.
- 3.7.6.18. Determine which predators are having an impact on RMBS, identify thresholds that trigger management actions, and identify and implement different methods of control.
- 3.7.6.19. Promote development of strategic prescribed burning and/or noxious weed programs to enhance RMBS habitat.
- 3.7.6.20. Avoid releasing bighorn sheep into areas occupied by domestic sheep and/or goats, feral horses and burros, and exotic ungulates.

3.7.7. Desert Bighorn Sheep Tasks/Strategies

- 3.7.7.1. Develop WSF Desert BHS Conservation Team, and appoint a lead in U.S. and Mexico
- 3.7.7.2. Develop working relationships with key Government and NGO persons in each jurisdiction including establishing a contact directory/database of desert BHS stakeholders
- 3.7.7.3. Build trust, partnerships, and awareness with desert BHS stakeholder groups to improve communication and collaboration
- 3.7.7.4. Team reviews and refines Strategic Objectives
- 3.7.7.5. Solicit WSF, Chapter and Affiliate Annual Plan Input/Priorities
- 3.7.7.6. Team Lead assigns responsibilities and timelines to WSF staff/volunteers for accomplishing tasks
- 3.7.7.7. Solicit WSF, Chapter and Affiliate potential collaborative \$
- 3.7.7.8. Work with Government Agencies in appropriate jurisdictions to update / create comprehensive desert BHS management plans

- 3.7.7.9. Establish centralized database that can be updated from multiple locations
- 3.7.7.10. Establish mechanism to share ideas and best practices – centralized database
- 3.7.7.11. Encourage development and maintenance of reliable desert BHS distribution maps
- 3.7.7.12. Encourage complete inventory/surveys in all areas
- 3.7.7.13. Determine and assist with \$ for periodic required/desired surveys
- 3.7.7.14. Undertake campaign to educate public about desert BHS, including threats and management challenges
- 3.7.7.15. Encourage Disease Prevention/Response Plans in all Jurisdictions
- 3.7.7.16. Encourage legislation/restrictions/regulations to prevent contact between domestic sheep and goats and desert BHS, to avoid risk of disease transmission.
- 3.7.7.17. Ensure core habitat protection policies are in place for all desert BHS habitat including access management plans for motorized use develop and enforce regulations on access/travel management. Protect critical habitats such as migration corridors, lambing and winter range.
- 3.7.7.18. Determine which predators are having an impact on desert BHS, identify thresholds that trigger management actions, and identify and implement different methods of control.
- 3.7.7.19. Promote development of strategic prescribed burning and/or noxious weed programs to enhance desert BHS habitat.
- 3.7.7.20. Avoid releasing bighorn sheep into areas occupied by domestic sheep and/or goats, feral horses and burros, and exotic ungulates.
- 3.7.7.21. Consider genetic profile of source herds, as well as herds to be augmented and translocate with species/sub species native to release site.
- 3.7.7.22. Promote development of strategic prescribed burning, water development, and/or noxious weed programs to enhance desert BHS habitat.

3.8. Desert Bighorn Sheep Strategic Sub-Objective 1) (Mexico)

Establish a top-down relationship with federal wildlife managers in the federal government of Mexico, and promote their possible inclusion and participation in WAFWA by 2020. Develop a comprehensive, cumulative

population estimate of desert BHS in Mexico, along with reliable land ownership and wild sheep distribution maps.

3.8.1. Desert Bighorn Sheep Tasks/Strategies

3.9.2.1. WSF Conservation Committee member Sergio Jiménez has volunteered to act as our link to Mexico's federal government wildlife leadership.

3.9.2.2. Encourage Mexican outfitters/landowners/ejidos to participate in developing reliable population estimates and distribution maps.

3.9.2.3. Develop a database of past desert BHS transplants in Mexico, similar to what has been developed for the U.S. and Canada by the WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group.

3.9.2.4. Develop a list of private sustainable-use, "free range" wild sheep hunting entities in Mexico

4. WILD SHEEP HUNTING & HARVEST OPPORTUNITIES

4.1. Advocate for ram harvest of 1.5-4% of estimated (non-listed) bighorn sheep populations, recognizing that some populations may need a higher percentage of ewe removal (either through translocation or harvest) to align bighorn sheep numbers with quality and quantity of available habitat.

4.2. Advocate for ewe harvest of 1-2% of estimated (non-listed) bighorn sheep populations, recognizing that some populations may need a higher percentage of ewe removal (either through translocation or harvest) to align bighorn sheep numbers with quality and quantity of available habitat.

4.3. Support efforts to encourage participation by young hunters, perhaps with differential, favorable license issuance of ewe permits to upcoming hunters.

5. DISEASE

5.1. Current Status

Throughout their range and over the past century or more, bighorn sheep have been very susceptible to, and impacted by, respiratory diseases, most notably pneumonia. Current knowledge has implicated a suite of disease agents, most notably *Pasteurella (Mannheimia)* and *Mycoplasma* bacteria, as the agents of highest concern. The number one threat to North American wild sheep populations is disease spread from domestic sheep and goats and already-infected wild sheep. Die-offs are yearly events in most bighorn ranges; initial steps are underway to minimize/prevent the possibility of thornhorn sheep and domestic sheep and goat interaction.

Disease vaccine research is a slow and costly undertaking, and positive results remain beyond researchers grasp. The facts of disease transmission are not widely accepted as scientifically proven. Identify other disease issues in wild sheep ranges and possible treatments.

5.2. Disease Strategic Objectives

By 2020, educate North American wildlife and land management agency leadership on the true facts of disease transmission.

5.3. Disease Tasks/Strategies

- 5.3.1. In partnership with the American Sheep Industry Association and woolgrower organizations, federal and crown land management agencies, state/provincial/ territorial/tribal wildlife agencies, private landowners, and other stakeholders, establish and achieve clear separation standards and protocols in each jurisdiction where potential contact may occur.
- 5.3.2. Pursue jointly-funded disease research (e.g., USDA, ASI, WSF, others).
- 5.3.3. Work actively with Dr. Tom Besser, Rocky Crate Endowed Chair for wild sheep disease research, in advance of Dr. Sri's imminent retirement (9/30/2015)
- 5.3.4. WSF PRAB advance collective recommendations to Dr. Besser < June 30, 2015, providing recommendations on focal areas for WSU-led disease research over next 3 year period
- 5.3.5. Actively participate w/ Dr. Besser through both the Rocky Crate Chair Advisory Committee, as well as an ad hoc technical advisory committee being assembled by Dr. Besser, to identify and prioritize disease research foci
- 5.3.6. Consider Legislative solutions

5.4. Advocate for Effective Separation Protocol (SP)

Using the WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group 2012 document "***Recommendations for Domestic Sheep and Goat Management in Wild Sheep Habitats***", advocate for implementation of identified strategies to achieve effective temporal and spatial separation between both domestic sheep/goats **and** infected wild sheep from healthy wild sheep, to protect core wild sheep populations on public and private lands, range-wide. ***Refine how the new definition of separation applies to transplant protocols already in place.*** Enlist jurisdictional Departments of Agriculture (or equivalent) for assistance in understanding protocol(s) used to separate infected livestock from healthy livestock.

5.5. Advocate for Disease Outbreak Response Protocol (DOR)

Recognizing the existence of the WAFWA Wildlife Health Committee (WHC), and recognizing that many jurisdictions already have DOR protocols, encourage sharing and information/data exchange of existing protocols with jurisdictions that do not currently have DOR protocols.

6. ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT

Mountain goats share much of their range with wild sheep species. They also share habitat and disease issues. Any WSF conservation work done for mountain goat could benefit wild sheep, as well. Including mountain goat conservation projects opens new opportunities for partnerships, Grant-in-Aid (GIA) funding

and GIA requests, mutually-beneficial conservation actions, earmarked projects, scholarship and legislative focus which can help strengthen WSF Conservation priorities.

6.1. Rocky Mountain Goat Tasks/Strategies

Already a WSF Affiliate, invite/bring the Rocky Mountain Goat Alliance (RMGA) to join WSF under its conservation umbrella, and further develop RMGA's conservation image, reach, and effectiveness.

7. MUSKOXEN

Muskoxen share some of their range with wild sheep species in AK, YK and NWT. They may share habitat and disease issues. Any WSF conservation work done for wild sheep disease and separation could benefit muskoxen populations. Muskoxen are raised for commercial harvest in some regions of Canada. Including muskoxen conservation projects opens new opportunities for partnerships, Grant-in-Aid (GIA) funding and GIA requests, mutually-beneficial conservation actions, earmarked projects, scholarship and legislative focus which can help strengthen WSF Conservation priorities.

7.1. Muskoxen Tasks/Strategies

Bring Muskoxen under the WSF umbrella and develop its conservation package.

8. INTERNATIONAL

8.1. Current Status

WSF has little Asia or Mexico sheep conservation program or oversight personnel. However, SCI, as an active conservation partner, is active in Asia and presents opportunities for a continued and expanded strategic alliance between WSF and SCI to develop and implement conservation efforts in Asia.

8.2. Strategic Objective I One

Starting in 2014 Dr. Michael Frisina, a WSF Conservation Committee member, will take on the role of voluntary WSF International Conservation Specialist. Dr. Frisina will act as our ears and voice for overseas WSF interests.

- 8.2.1. By 2016, develop an International WSF Master's Degree scholarship program for both local and foreign students, targeting needed subject matters that will benefit many facets of the WSF Conservation Strategy.
 - a. Dr. Michael Frisina has been appointed the WSF International Conservation Specialist.
 - b. Create the WSF Conservation and Education Initiative (CEI) by 2016, develop an WSF Master's Degree scholarship program for local and foreign students, targeting needed subject matters that will benefit many facets of the WSF Mission.

- 8.2.2. THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP but what I see need for is a Master Thesis Scholarship that will produce release benefits for our Conservation Strategy. We pick the subject matter of the thesis work to benefit our specialized needs in science, disease, political science, and land management grazing.

9. INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION INITIATIVE (ICEI)

To foster the WSF goal of assisting international countries in developing effective sustainable-use programs, managed by highly-trained professionals, we recommend a specific approach for consideration. The following key elements, melding educational scholarship and applied research funding, are requirements to maintain successful, sustainable-use conservation programs.

- 9.1. Provide student funding tied to specific applied-research projects. Funding would assist worthy students to achieve advanced degrees through research, emphasizing sustainable-use conservation. A key element to successful conservation in developing international countries is a highly-trained group of wildlife scientists, skilled in the art and science of wildlife conservation and management. While international countries have many highly-trained wildlife scientists, most have a background in classic zoology rather than management of free-ranging, migratory large ungulates as pioneered in North America by scholars like Aldo Leopold.
- 9.2. The pool of students and projects for research and education proposed here is much different than for many other education projects. This is because the ICEI emphasizes training of professionals who will remain in place in their respective countries working on sustainable-use research, benefiting the country and local area.
- 9.3. For reasons expressed in items 1 and 2, success of the ICEI depends on mobility (i.e. not tied to a specific university). Rather than a scholarship tied to a specific university, the ICEI would be administered via an ear-marked fund retained by WSF. This fund and decisions for funded projects would be managed by the WSF Conservation Committee, through the leadership of the Committee Chairman. The Conservation Committee Chairman will lead development of a set of protocols for prioritizing proposed projects for funding. Key among priorities will be funding both the educational and research aspects of projects designed to further knowledge of sustainable-use management and conservation tied to sport hunting. Priority projects will emphasize conservation of large, free-ranging wild mountain and desert ungulates native to central Asia.
- 9.4. For reasons described in items 2 and 3, projects will be developed through collaboration of N. A. Universities with those in central Asia, WSF, and at times, other conservation entities, both governmental and NGO.
- 9.5. Individual committee members, selected by the WSF Conservation Committee Chairman, will serve as advisors to the Chairman in execution and development of the ICEI.
- 9.6. Petition USFWS to allow import of Tien Shan Argali from Kyrgyzstan, a 10-year goal.

10. FUNDING/SPONSOR RECOGNITION and PROCESS PROTOCOL

10.1. Current Status

Strategic Objective: Underwriting the costs of the outlined WSF strategic objectives will require a combination of traditional WSF “funded projects” and earmarked funds from sponsors that support specific objectives plus establishing partnerships with US game departments that develop access to the Pittman Robinson Conservation Funds.

10.2. Tasks

- 10.2.1. Develop access to Pittman-Robertson Funds by developing Wild Sheep Partnership programs with state wildlife departments and other conservation groups designed to access Pittman-Robertson funds which can triple needed conservation funds. Export the principles of the program to Canada for development of a similar conservation fund.
- 10.2.2. Refine the development of these earmarked programs to reflect a saleable WSF “Conservation Product” and to develop written protocol on the process and how to recognize the sponsors of these earmarked objectives.
- 10.2.3. Target grant opportunities and look for a grant writer or appoint a WSF staffer to do so.
- 10.2.4. WSF will retain 10-20% (negotiable) from most donated funds to cover operational expenses.