

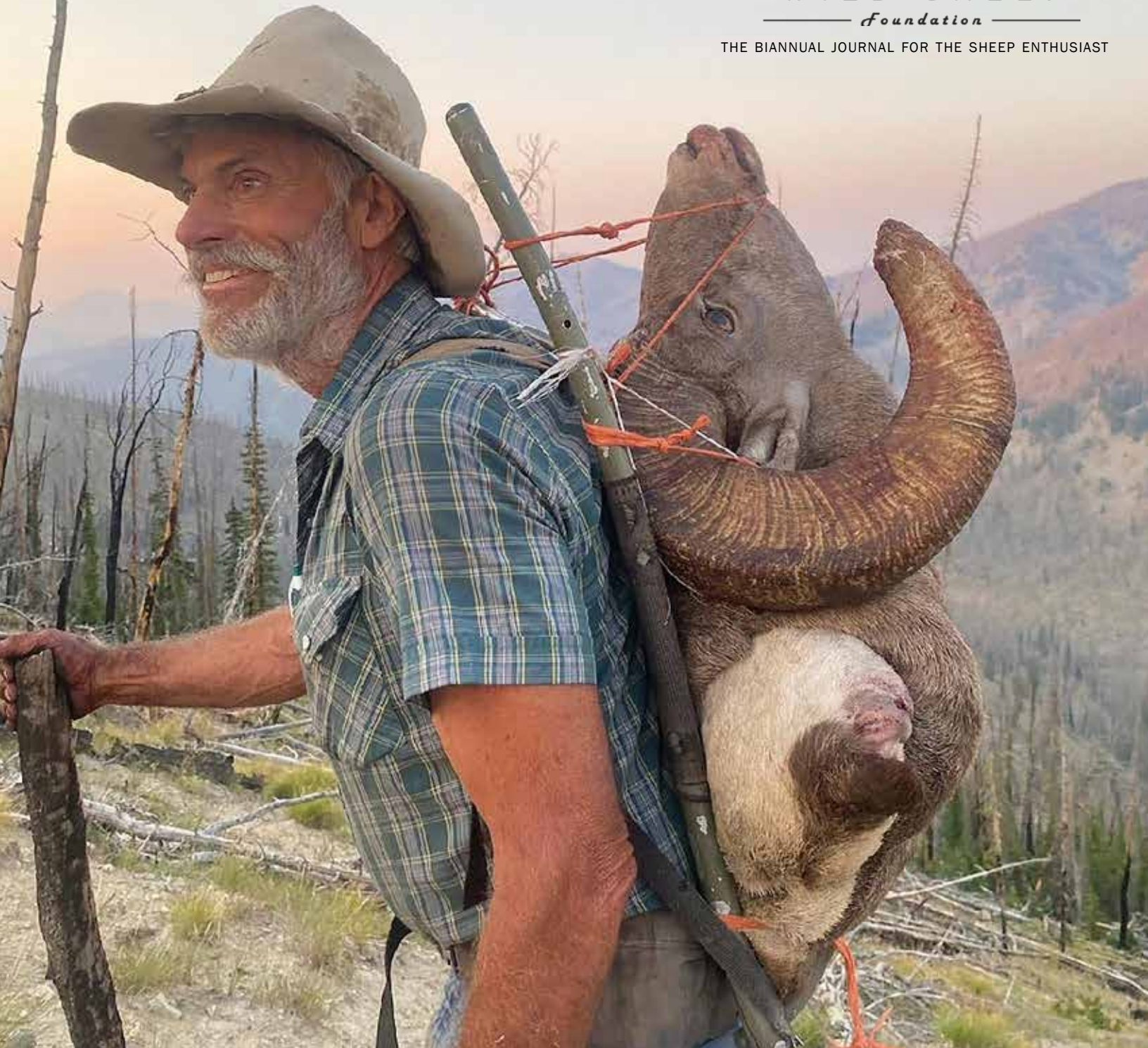
SUMMER 2023



IDAHO

WILD SHEEP
Foundation

THE BIENNIAL JOURNAL FOR THE SHEEP ENTHUSIAST





KRYPTTEK[®] TECHNOLOGIES

Kryptek Outdoor Group is dedicated to bringing the hunter the most versatile, proven hunting camouflage patterns and giving you those patterns in the industry's leading clothing technology. We are proud to develop our latest clothing technologies that are infused into our hunting apparel line that will improve your experience in Kryptek hunting camouflage. Staying true to our words "Battlefield To Backcountry" by taking lessons from the battlefield and applying them to the Kryptek technical clothing line.

- 
KRYPTTEK WOOL
Nature's best secret is its hair. Kryptek's Merino Wool provides superior thermal management, wicking and moisture.
- 
KRYPTTEK WICK
Industry leading moisture management technology using hollow fibers to wick moisture away from the body for better performance.
- 
KRYPTTEK FIT
Superior fabric design pattern, specifically designed to reduce drag and increase range of motion.
- 
KRYPTTEK SHIELD
Completely waterproof yet breathable material to shed water away while still managing moisture appropriately for dehumidification.
- 
KRYPTTEK DNA
Innovative woven fabric stretch laminate infused in Kryptek's technical clothing line. Breathable, durable, and versatile.
- 
KRYPTTEK IMMUNE
Antibacterial coating embedded in garment fibers reduces bacteria growth, ensuring smell-free body odors.
- 
KRYPTTEK QUIET
The optimal noise reduction fabric prevents the maximum use of sound and reduces the hunter's acoustic signature.
- 
KRYPTTEK ANATOMY
Pattern composition utilizing one of Kryptek's proven camouflage patterns allows the advantage of the previous adaptations of the gear you have.
- 
KRYPTTEK COOLING
Superior advanced cooling technology reduces fabric temperature, keeping you cool.
- 
KRYPTTEK TECH-CLOTH
The leading fabric technology that promotes garment lifespan and minimizes dry time.




UTILIZING 3M™ & X-STATIC®

3M™ Thinsulate™ Odor-Resistant Insulation with X-STATIC® fibers is an advanced textile fiber that combines insulation with precious metal technology for warmth and odor resistance. With its natural antimicrobial properties, a layer of pure silver is used on the X-STATIC® fibers to inhibit the growth of odor-causing bacteria in the insulation. This mid-loft insulation helps keep your outerwear long-lasting and fresh.

FIELDING COOL TOUCH™ FABRICS

Eclipse™ Cool Touch Yarn fabric contains cooling materials that help regulate skin surface temperature. This technology allows superior moisture management to enhance heat ventilation and increase the comfort level, giving the wearer an instant cooling sensation.



KRYPTTEK[®]



FADE INTO YOUR ENVIRONMENT



IN TESTS USING LASER-RETINAL TRACKING TECHNOLOGY, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DISCOVERED IT TOOK SUBJECTS LONGER TO LOCATE KRYPTTEK THAN ANY OTHER CAMO PATTERN, PROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF KRYPTTEK CAMOUFLAGE. KRYPTTEK MATCHES YOUR ENVIRONMENT WITH MULTIPLE COLORWAYS SO YOU EFFECTIVELY *DISAPPEAR*.



THIS ISSUE

Features	1	ON THE COVER - DEL MORTON, PHOTO BY BRENTON CORDLE
	24	DOWN WITH THE SICKNESS X 2 BY JON ROTH
	32	31ST ANNUAL IDAHO BIGHORN LOTTERY TAG BY PAUL DONALDSON
	44	THE DECISIONS OF A SHEEP HUNTER BY DIRK MENDIVE
	52	DOUBLE TROUBLE BY CARTER SWAIN
	57	THE LEGENDARY STAN POTTS
	64	A GENTLEMAN'S HUNT BY DEL MORTON
	96	JIM SAGE MOUNTAINS BY COLTEN GILBERT
	104	RUNNING DOWN SEABISQUIT BY CLAY HILL
	112	NEW ZEALAND DREAM HUNT BY JAMES HAMILTON
	124	AN ORANGE COUNTY GIRL BY EDD WOSLUM
	132	WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED BY JUSTIN RUSSELL
	140	THE UNEXPECTED STORM BY WYATT WARNER
	148	DIGGING DEEP BY SCOTT GAHRINGER
Inside Idaho WSF	11	PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS
	13	IDAHO WSF 2023 BANQUET & FUNDRAISER
	19	NEW RAFFLES
	20	2024 LIFE MEMBER RAFFLE
	21	IDAHO WSF 2024 BANQUET & FUNDRAISER - SAVE THE DATE
	38	SUMMER SOCIAL & IDAHO BIGHORN LOTTERY TAG DRAWING
	39	2023 IDAHO BIGHORN LOTTERY TAG
	59	OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - MIKE SCHLEGEL
	61	OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - JIM JEFFRESS
	70	2022/2023 BIGHORN SHEEP PROJECTS
	72	LOWER PANTHER MAIN SALMON CAPTURE BY HANNAH WARNER
	76	NORTH HELLS CANYON CAPTURE BY RICH CARIGNAN
	80	SOUTH BEAVERHEAD CAPTURE BY DR. BRUCE MINCHER
	86	OWYHEE FRONT CAPTURE BY BILL LONDON
	91	LOWER SALMON CAPTURE BY DON COLTER
	95	JIM SAGE CAPTURE UPDATE
	121	OWYHEE RANGE SURVEY
	158	CONSERVATION PARTNER



Aluminum & Titanium components
Apollo: 2.1 oz Cronus: 2.5 oz

Reduce recoil
up to 64%

Interchangeable,
caliber-specific insert
PAT. NO. 11,098,971

Increase accuracy
up to 45%

Eliminate
muzzle rise

Available at HIGHLANDCANYON.COM

Working to 'Put and Keep Wild Sheep on the Mountain' since 1982

MISSION

The mission of Idaho Wild Sheep is to enhance wild sheep populations in Idaho, and with partners in adjacent states, for public enjoyment, education, and fair chase hunting; to promote professional wildlife management, and protect sportsmen's rights.

HISTORY

The Idaho Wild Sheep was founded in 1982 by two dozen concerned sportsmen who wanted to "put more bighorns on Idaho's mountains." From that core group, many of which are still very active on our board and committees, we have grown to a thriving organization with over 900 committed members.

Idaho WSF Board Members

Josh Miller, President

Triston Warner, Vice President

Bill London, Past President

Don Colter, Treasurer

Michael Keady, Secretary

Rich Carignan, Director

Chance Elam, Director

Colten Gilbert, Director

Zach Higgins, Associate Board

Jeremy Hixson, Director

Jim Jeffress, Associate Board

Mitch McFarland, Director

Chuck Middleton, Director

Bruce Mincher, Associate Board

Jon Rampton, Director

Michael Schlegel, Director

Scott Sorenson, Director

Carter Swain, Director

Ryan M. Thomas, Director

COMMITTEES

BANQUET/FUNDRAISING

Josh Miller and Triston Warner (Co-chairs)

Don Colter, Chance Elam, Colten Gilbert, Jeremy Hixson, Bill London, Chuck Middleton, Carter Swain, Ryan M. Thomas

CONSERVATION

Bruce Mincher and Bill London (Co-chairs), Mike Schlegel, Jim Jeffress, Carter Swain, Rich Carignan, Ryan M. Thomas, Chuck Middleton

MARKETING/MEMBERSHIP

Triston Warner (Chair), Josh Miller, Rich Carignan, Jon Rampton, Michael Keady

LOTTERY

Michael Keady (Chair), Rich Carignan, Jon Rampton, Scott Sorenson, Carter Swain

JOURNAL

Bill London (Chair), Mike Schlegel, Mitch McFarland, Colten Gilbert, Jeremy Hixson



10% OFF HARD CASES

**TSA Compatible*



Use Code:
WSFCASE23



WWW.BOYTHARNES.COM • 641-342-6773

Offer expires November 1, 2023





EXPERIENCE THE THRILL,
CHALLENGE, AND ADVENTURE OF
A PROFESSIONALLY GUIDED BIG
GAME HUNT, IN THE BEAUTIFULLY
RUGGED OREGON WILDERNESS.



ROOSEVELT ELK

COLUMBIAN BLACKTAIL

COLUMBIAN WHITETAIL

BLACK BEAR

BIGHORN SHEEP



MTN. GOAT

ANTELOPE

RIO GRANDE TURKEY

***SPECIALIZING IN
COMBINATION HUNTS**

EDENRIDGEOUTFITTERS.COM



Summer 2023

creative director/ administrator

Tracy Rowley

editors/journal committee

Bill London, Mike Schlegel, Mitch McFarland, Colten Gilbert,
Jeremy Hixson

contributing writers

Rich Carignan, Don Colter, Paul Donaldson, Scott Gahringer, Colten
Gilbert, James Hamilton, Clay Hill, Bill London, Dirk Mendive, Bruce
Mincher, Josh Miller, Del Morton, Jon Roth, Justin Russell, Carter Swain,
Hannah Warner, Wyatt Warner, Leanne Woslum

Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation

P.O. Box 8224, Boise, Idaho 83707

Phone: 208-345-6171

Email: info@idahowildsheep.org


Website: www.idahowildsheep.org

CONTACT THE PUBLICATION

Contributing photos, articles, stories and research pertaining to wild
sheep or the interests of members of the Idaho WSF are always welcome.
Contributed material will be published at the committees discretion.

All membership's include a subscription.



1205 N Whitley Dr. Fruitland ID 83617
208-452-PAWN(7296) 





Some of the Best

BIG GAME HUNTING

in North America



Craig & Alana Kiselbach
terminusmtn@gmail.com

NOW BOOKING

Stone Sheep, Moose, Goat,
Caribou, Elk, Wolf, Black Bear,
Lynx, Wolverine & Combo Hunts

Call Now: 1-250-442-8195 | www.terminusmountain.com | BRITISH COLUMBIA CANADA



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

As I sit here to write my first presidents' message to you all, I do so from a position of immense humility. The Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation has quickly grown to being one of the largest chapters in the country and, becoming a leader in the state amongst conservation groups. The past presidents that I have known from my short time on the board have built a business model for this organization that is continuing to set us up for success on the ground. I am honored that I have been chosen to follow in their footsteps.

Wild Sheep Foundation Chairman, Glen Landrus challenged everyone to "Do Epic Shit" for wild sheep. Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation has taken that challenge and for those that attended banquet or watched "Going Big" online know that we have done just that. 2022/23 was nothing short of amazing from both a conservation and fundraising standpoint. I cannot think of another state or chapter that has ever pulled off the efforts put forth this past year on all the various herds resulting in 215 collars being put out to gather crucial information for managers to utilize in their decision-making process. The financial commitment that IDWSF, WSF, Midwest WSF, and IDFG made to bighorn sheep in Idaho is outstanding. Equally, was the opportunity that we were given to recruit our members to participate in the captures and get their hands on a live sheep. I know for myself, after killing both a Dall sheep and bighorn, the experience to put my hands on a living, breathing wild sheep was truly an emotional experience.

The 2023 Banquet was a record-breaking event both in terms of attendance and funds generated for conservation. Our members showed up excited for the night and opened their wallets to help put sheep on the mountain. This board of directors feeds off our members' excitement and continues to want to go bigger and better each year and I can say that 2024 planning has already begun and the excitement is already through the roof to try and top this year.

None of this would be possible without our conservation partners. You will see that term more and more often and that term is continuing to expand its meaning. It no longer just refers to those other organizations or agencies that we have historically partnered with on conservation

projects. It now refers to those who donate/sponsor our banquets or raffles. Many of these companies get hit up thousands of times each year for donations but they CHOOSE to partner with us because our organization and its members show their support for their business. As evident from our banquet attendance, it is also referring to our political leaders who either attended or sent their representative to our banquet. Thank them when you can and encourage other elected officials to attend and join. Partner also refers to the nearly 1,000 members we now have in this family.

Please put down July 28th on your calendar and plan to attend one of the three lottery events we will be hosting around the state and celebrate with us and the lucky winner of this year's tag. We will have fun, refreshments, socializing, and raffles going at each event as well as roll out our next Stone Sheep raffle at the events.

Thank you again for helping us put and keep wild sheep in Idaho's mountains!

Josh Miller
President
Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation





38th Annual BANQUET & FUNDRAISER

BY: JOSH MILLER

Thank you to everyone who participated and, to our Conservation Partners who donated to

THE 38TH ANNUAL BANQUET & FUNDRAISER



Photo credit: Dr. Bruce Mincher

The 2023 banquet was nothing short of amazing. To be able to say we shattered records for another consecutive year is impressive. As I sat down to write this recap, I went and looked back at some of our previous year's numbers to try and gain some perspective. 2019 we set a record attendance of 690 people and raised \$215,000 net income. 2021 we held our outdoor event with 640 in attendance and raised a new record of \$243,000 net income! 2023 did not just shatter those two records, it obliterated them! On April 1, 2023, 850 people showed up and we raised over \$547,000 NET INCOME for Idaho!!!

There was excitement in the room from the minute the doors opened with people wanting to get one of the remaining stone sheep, grizzly bear, and snowy mountain rifle raffle tickets. Two of the three big raffle winners were in the room which is always fun to see. Due to some amazing partners that fully underwrote the games, we were able to spice up the games and make them the best they have ever been! The raffle and silent auction area was popping with excitement for a chance to win any of the tiered raffle packages. Silent auction was filled with optics, great gear, artwork, etc.

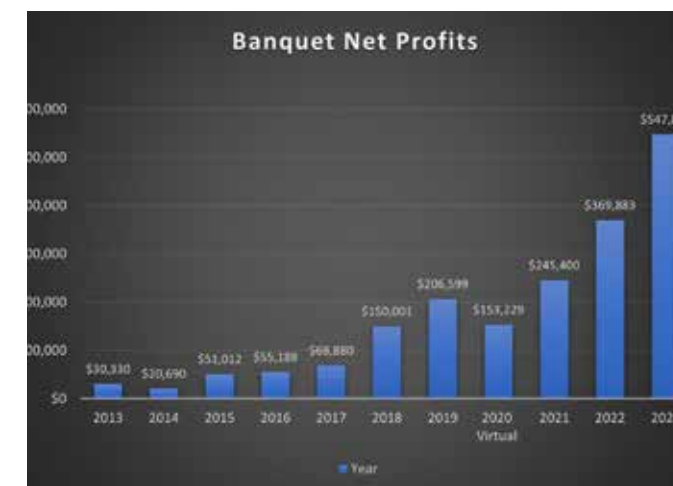
The live auction was electrifying with the energy from the auctioneer, ring men, and bidders raising their hands faster than the screen could keep up with! We had a great line up of hunts, fishing trips, guns, artwork, you name it. Many of our auction items are long time donors from the best in the business. We had life memberships for other chapters that sold for five times their value. We had some incredibly special items that were bought and donated back. Willie's Distillery's endowment piece raised \$5,700 for our endowment in Robin Blazer's memory. The custom Tri-State firepit donated by Glenn Landrus raised \$24,750. A hand carved custom skull made by Nevada Grassie raised \$20,500 for Idaho WSF and \$20,500 for Brothers in Arms Safaris, dedicated to hunting and the opportunity to give back to those who have given all. And, the Freelance moose hunt raised an astounding \$85,000 which will be coming back to Idaho through WSF's Grant in Aide Program for either Tri-State or ION.

Our Banquet was attended by the entire National Wild Sheep Foundation board of directors along with many of the WSF staff. We are honored that they moved their board meeting

to Boise so they could participate and support Idaho. We also had with us, many of IDFG senior leaders that without their dedication, we would not have accomplished such aggressive capture and test efforts this year. We also had representatives of three of our national elected officials. Dirk Mendive from Representative Fulcher's office, Craig Quarterman from Representative Simpson's office, and Casey Atteburry from Senator Crapo's office took time out of their busy schedule to support the banquet. We also had Idaho Representative Charlie Shepherd, Vice Chair of the House Natural Resources and Conservation Committee and Idaho Senator Carrie Semmelroth, member of the Senate Resources and Environment committee. Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation is being recognized by our elected officials as an ally. Make sure you thank them for supporting our cause.

As you flip through this magazine, take note of the ads and logos throughout. These are the businesses that are supporting our cause and, who made this banquet possible. Please consider them when you are shopping or looking for a hunt. We have also launched a new Conservation Partner Directory on our website to help you find anything you may be looking for. Check it out and as always, thank them for supporting Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation.

Thank you to all our many volunteers who showed up and worked their butts off to give back and help make sure our guests had a night to remember. Thank you to everyone that attended and dug deep into your wallets to support. Mark on your calendar now for March 16th and get ready for 2024!!



**IT'S MORE
THAN A
BUILDING.**

**IT'S MORE
THAN A
RELATIONSHIP.**

**IT'S MORE
THAN A
CHALLENGE.**

**IT'S AN INVESTMENT
IN YOU!**



WRIGHT BROTHERS

www.wbtbc.com



Explore AND HUNT
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA



www.goldenbearoutfitting.com + 250-794-8350



STONE SHEEP
MOUNTAIN GOAT
CANADIAN MOOSE
MOUNTAIN CARIBOU
WOLVES
BLACK BEAR



IF YOUR ACTIONS INSPIRE OTHERS
TO DREAM MORE, LEARN MORE,
DO MORE AND BECOME MORE,
YOU ARE A LEADER.

-John Quincy Adams

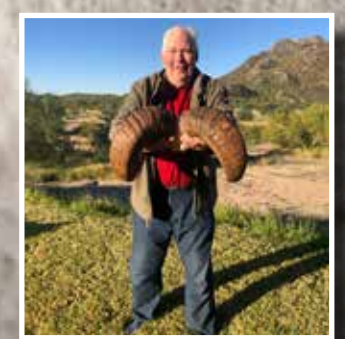
THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS:



JIM WARNER



BRIAN KRAMER



TOM SELLIN

Welcome to our new board members Chance Elam,
Scott Sorenson and Ryan M. Thomas

Designing & Building
World Class Trophy Rooms



Brush Country Studios and
Prairie Mountain Wildlife Studios
Would like to Thank
Champion Ranch, Brady TX
For the opportunity to help
Design and Build this amazing
Hunting Lodge



NEW RAFFLES

2024 LIFE MEMBER RAFFLE

10 DAY FREE RANGE
TROPHY DESERT
SHEEP HUNT
NOV 2024/MAR 2025



INCLUDED WITH
LIFE MEMBER HUNT

LIFE SIZE
SHEEP MOUNT



RAFFLE

TICKETS GO ON SALE
JULY 26TH

10 DAY STONE
SHEEP HUNT
AUG 14-25, 2024



RAFFLE

TICKETS GO ON SALE IN
DECEMBER

10 DAY DALL
SHEEP HUNT
AUG 8-18, 2024



RAFFLE

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL
MEDIA FOR UPDATES

10 DAY STONE
SHEEP HUNT
AUG 10-23, 2025



TWO COMPANIES ONE GOAL



WWW.IDAHOWILDSHEEP.ORG

WWW.BRUSHCOUNTRYSTUDIOS.COM | WWW.PRAIRIEMOUNTAINWILDLIFE.COM

16526 CYPRESS ROSEHILL RD, CYPRESS TX 77429 | 1.281.256.0742 | OFFICE@BRUSHCOUNTRYSTUDIOS.COM

2024



10-DAY FREE RANGE TROPHY DESERT SHEEP HUNT



39th
Annual



Banquet & Fundraiser

LIFE MEMBER RAFFLE



COMING MARCH 16, 2024

Boise Centre, Boise, Idaho

ALL Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation LIFE and CENTENNIAL members will be entered into this drawing. **No purchase necessary but, YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN.**

Winner will be drawn at the 39th Annual Idaho Wild Sheep Banquet and Fundraiser on March 16, 2024 at the Boise Centre in Boise, Idaho. **Banquet registration is required. Registration will open for Life and Centennial members in December.**

Life members will receive one entry and Centennial members will receive three entries. Life and Centennial memberships can be purchased now through the banquet. Current Life members can upgrade to a Centennial membership. Payment plans available.

Hunt date: November-March 2024-2025 to be finalized with outfitter.

Included: Accommodations, licenses, trophy fees and transportation during hunt.

Not included: Pre and post hunt travel, accommodations before and after hunt, tips.

*Hunt may only be transferred to a Life member present at the drawing, during the banquet on 3/16/24.

La Guarida Ranch encompasses 20,000 acres (8,000 ha) located in the Tinaja Verde mountains, approximately 35 miles southwest of Presidio, TX., which was a historic habitat of the desert bighorn sheep.

- Hunters can expect to harvest rams in the 175-190 category.
- 100% Hunting success.
- Bow hunters can expect 100% hunting opportunity.
- Hunting elevation between 4,500 – 7,000 ft.
- Trophies are eligible for the Boone and Crockett record book.

- Hunting is done mostly on horseback.
- Authentic and challenging fair chase hunting experience.

ALSO INCLUDED

LIFE SIZE SHEEP MOUNT

DONATED BY



LIVE AUCTION

SILENT AUCTION

GAMES

RAFFLES

HUNTS

VACATIONS

GUNS

OPTICS

GEAR

APPAREL

ART

FISHING TRIPS

TAXIDERMY

JEWELRY

AND MORE!



BEST of the WEST ARIZONA



HUSKEMAW OPTICS
LONG RANGE OPTICS

- 4-16x42 BLUE DIAMOND
- 5-20x50 BLUE DIAMOND
- 5-20x50 TACTICAL HUNTER
- 5-30x56 TACTICAL HUNTER

ACCURIZER SERVICES

- FREE ESTIMATE ON OUR WEBSITE
- WE BEGIN WITH YOUR RIFLE
- ADD A HUSKEMAW SCOPE
- BARREL SEASONING
- LOAD TESTING & DATA COLLECTION
- CUSTOM YARDAGE TURRETS
- YOUR ACCURIZED LONG RANGE SYSTEM



SHOOTING SCHOOL

- LONG RANGE HUNTING ETHICS
- SHOOT OUR CUSTOM RIFLES
- SHOOT OUR AMMO
- SHOOT 1000+ YARDS
- HOST YOUR OWN PRIVATE SCHOOL

NEVER MISS AGAIN!






CALL PAUL AT: 480-682-7763
BESTOFTHEWESTARIZONA@GMAIL.COM



BEST OF THE WEST CUSTOM RIFLES

- MOUNTAIN HUNTER
- ALTOPO PACKAGE
- CUSTOM CHASSIS
- SIGNATURE SERIES
- LONG RANGE MUZZLELOADER

WWW.BESTOFTHEWESTARIZONA.COM



WESTERN ROCK PRODUCTS LLC.
www.westrockpro.com



Built for big hunts in tight places.



NEW
SKY SOLUS 1P



Min Trail Weight: 3 lbs. 14 oz. | 24.5 square feet | Capacity: 1 person

The Sky Solus 1P is a lightweight, four-season, freestanding shelter specialized for the solo alpine hunter. Built to withstand brutal mountain weather but incredibly nimble for pitching in steep, ultra-tight terrain, the Sky Solus crosses the line between a tent and a bivy to give hunters the perfect shelter for pursuing big game deep into the backcountry.

Available now at StoneGlacier.com

By JOHN ROTH



DOWN

WITH THE SICKNESS X 2

Fourteen years ago, in 2009, sitting with a good friend Greg Davis and a customer discussing a business deal, the crazy question was asked me, "Have you ever thought about sheep hunting?" And just like that the sickness started flowing into my veins! At the young age of 36, with three young children and a beautiful, loving spouse. My dilemma was how to explain my new passion to my wife and gain her support. Thank goodness she knew about my crazy passion for hunting and the outdoors, offering support and encouragement.

My interest in hunting sheep escalated rapidly and turned into lust after Greg booked his first hunt in 2010 for the Brooks Range in Alaska with Rugged Rock Creek Outfitters. As sheep hunting can go, Greg came home without harvesting a ram after a 14-day backpack trip. After hearing about his adventures, days later we were rebooking the same hunt for 2012, he being the first hunt and me the second hunt two weeks later. As I was stepping off the bush plane, Greg and his good friend Bob Abrams were boarding to head home with a beautiful ram and a really nice inland grizzly bear. The excitement was bar none at this point, and I was ready for the first sheep-hunting adventure of my newly acquired passion. The first week was grueling with many miles up canyons with a constant rain/snow mix daily. Due to the weather, we only spotted one ram and a few ewes and no opportunities. After the hike back to base camp, a day of rest was needed. While at camp, I located a beautiful blonde grizzly bear across the canyon and the hunt was on! Four hours later and after one successful shot, the grizzly was mine. Week two showed similar weather patterns and after many miles, my hunt ended with incredible memories and tag soup. So ended my first sheep hunt to harvest a ram.

I was raised to fight defeat and bounce right back. Before the end of the year, a Dall sheep hunt was re-booked for 2015 with Stoney River Lodge. My friend Mike Ressler also booked, so, the wait began!

I knew it would drive me crazy without hunting these crazy critters until then, so, find another sheep hunt! It was easy to convince another close friend, Paul Prohaska, from Wisconsin, that we needed to make a trip to Texas and hunt Aoudads to help with the dreaded wait for 2015. After harvesting a couple of great Aoudads, it was time to apply in Idaho, plus all the additional states for more sheep hunting opportunities. Usually, this just amounts to obtaining bonus/preference points! Christmas arrived June 10th a letter from the Idaho Department of Fish & Game congratulating me for drawing a bighorn sheep tag! Thus, I would be hunting a Rocky in my home state, in a brand-new unit!

The summer of 2015 was filled with many scouting trips with family, and friends, plus getting in Sheep shape for my two upcoming sheep hunts. Did I mention a sickness anytime yet??? August 8th arrived and off to Anchorage, I went. We flew out early the next morning to a river, unloaded gear, hiked up a mountain, and set up camp before nightfall. Day one was filled with spotting several sheep



up the canyon. We kept climbing and looking, fighting wind, fog, and snow all morning until reaching the top. Around 1, the weather broke with sunshine and a beautiful legal ram across the canyon. At 1,200 yards and with no way to close the distance, the sheep Gods started to shine down! The rams got up from their beds and worked their way across and up the canyon to us. At 350 yards, the ram took his last step and I was

kicked out of the Wild Sheep Foundation's <1 Club!

Arriving home and only having two weeks before the Idaho opener, it was time for family and getting back to reality. After several scouting trips during which I spotted several rams, I knew exactly where I needed to be on the opening day. My party included Ken Leavitt, Greg Davis, Bob Abrams, and Tim Kunkel; I knew we would locate a ram I had seen several times while scouting. Much like most years in the Salmon River country, fires were everywhere and we woke up to a canyon full of smoke, with very little visibility, however, we hiked down to our lookout point. After several



hours of silence, discussions, and frustration the smoke lifted. Within an hour I spotted my target ram on a ridge across the canyon. The race was on back to the top, grabbing additional gear, and water and bailed down the ridge the ram was on. We arrived at a predetermined point and set up for my shot opportunity. It felt like an eternity, as the minutes passed. The ram started feeding, heading to a water crossing 300 yards directly below us. Similar to my recent Dall hunt, my Rocky was down! After the celebration, the work began, which included a long cold night on the side of the mountain! The Sheep leprechauns were obviously handing out 4 leaf clovers, as I had three hunts during which I shot a ram on the 1st day of the hunt!



With a year like 2015, why quit now? Once again, back to business with Greg in 2016. The thought of Stone sheep hunting was mentioned and within a few weeks, Jim Peterson @ Tahltan Outfitters had the two of us on his books for 2017! After a gorgeous 10-hour horseback ride into spike camp, sheep hunting was all we could think about. Similar to my first Dall hunt, the pounding rain, kept us in the tent for several days of our hunt. At this point, you can only bemoan the bad luck Mother Nature or your hunting partner is responsible for! Although several sheep were seen during the hunt, Greg had the only opportunity to harvest a ram. However, my guide and I sat across the canyon and watched it unfold.



Defeat again for the second time in my sheep hunting career; not a chance! I immediately rebooked with Jim prior to our flight out from his camp! The soonest opening he had was in 2021. I and Brent Scott would be the first hunters of the year. Let me tell you, four years seems like an eternity, and then COVID strikes, pushing the hunt out one more year. It was time to bring in my good luck hunting partner Paul Prohaska for a Sheep/Goat combo hunt. Paul, Brent, and I set out on a mission for two Stone rams and two Mountain goats. Brent was lucky enough to harvest a beautiful Stone and a goat within the first week, putting pressure on Paul and me. Despite the excellent weather on this trip, we still missed a day or two of hunting. However, on day 8 we were in the middle of some ewes and a few sub-legal rams. Since there were no legal rams, we moved over a finger ridge and located a ram bedded on a pinnacle ledge. The wait began, with hours spent counting rings and waiting for the ram to turn his head so we could be 100% positive he was legal. The safety soon clicked forward; the rifle roared in the canyon. My ram fell several 100' off his perch to the bottom of the mountain. With the pack out completed, my ¾ slam was done!



Paul's adventure for a goat began with three days remaining on the hunt. Several goats were located; however, none were solid Billys or were just out of reach. We began our journey home with another successful sheep hunt in the books.

2022 was just as good for my hunting buddy Greg, with Idaho drawing his name. The good news; this was a tag for his ¾ slam, the bad news; I had a hunt at the same time. After 19 days of hunting, Greg was able to harvest his ram in one of Idaho's least successful sheep units.

During a business meeting in 2021, two sick sheep hunters devised a plan for our Slam Ram hunt together. I was the planner and immediately reached out to Hugo Loera @ HR Big Game Outfitters in Sonora and set up our hunt for February 2023. This consisted of two sheep hunts and a possible Coues deer hunt to follow if we harvested our rams with his son Travin. I believe Hugo is as committed to his business of guiding as we sheep hunters are to our hunting!

We began receiving pictures of multiple rams in our area north of Hermosillo two weeks prior to our arrival. The anticipation of achieving two bighorn sheep slams in one trip was over the top! After arriving at a ranch house a few hours north of Hermosillo, and eating an excellent authentic dinner, the thought of sleep was out the window. Day one arrived, Greg drew the short straw and I would have the first opportunity to chase a Desert ram. With several guides on hand looking at the mountains in front of us, two rams were located within the first couple of hours. The wait was over and the death march across the desert floor began with one guide and me. An hour into the climb up, we relocated the two rams and the wait began for them to stand from their beds and move off the ridge top into the drainage above us. With high winds, a couple of misplaced shots, plus one well-placed shot, my Slam Ram lay on the mountain several hundred yards above us. With the sheep hunting party racing to us, the climb up to the ram was full of excitement and congrats! Hours later after dressing, caping, and several pictures, we came out of the clouds and back to sea level back to camp.

Day two would begin much like day one with a three-hour drive into the Sonoran desert to the base of the mountains. With several eyes on the glass, another ram was spotted early in the morning. Greg and his guide were off and hiking to the base of the mountain. The rest of us stayed put and watched the hunt unfold, keeping tabs on the ram. With similar elevation and one canyon over from where I shot my ram, Greg put a lethal shot on his Desert Sheep Slam Ram, much like I had the day before!

Sheep hunting in North America and Idaho is as good as it gets! It only gets better with family and friends enjoying the hunt. My Sheep Sickness is far from over; the next generation of hunters in my family is just getting started; the hunts will be just as exciting and epic!

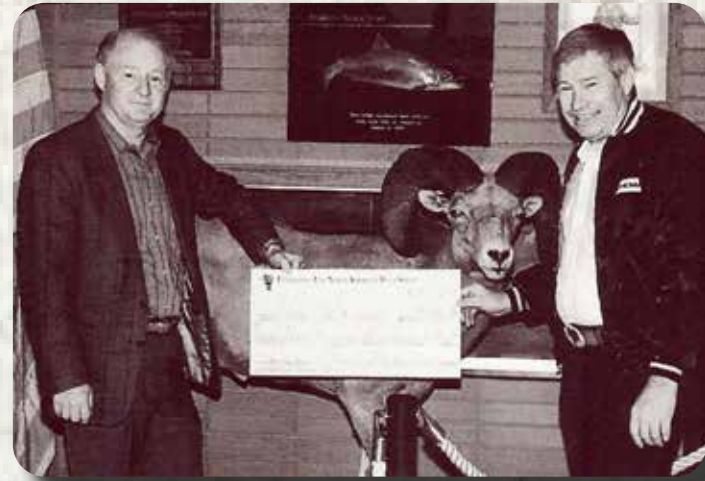


Idaho Wild
Sheep Foundation

Charter Members

- Mike Best
- Russ Biaggne
- James E. Blaine
- Mike Bland
- Mike Brusco
- Ed Carr
- Bob DiGrazia
- Rick Dredge
- Harold Eshelman
- Ralph Garrison
- Ron Gillette
- Scott Hayes
- Thomas Hinders
- Cheryl Hudgens
- James Kranz
- Burk Mantel
- Ralph McClintock
- Roger Michener
- Ron Morris
- Tom Parker
- Tom Schiermeir
- Wayne Schwabrow
- Ed Sweet
- Andy Thacker
- Jerry Thiessen
- Fred Wood
- Barry Wood
- Jerry Young

HISTORY BOOKS



1993
Harold Eshelman presents an auction tag check to Jerry Conley at the Fish & Game Headquarters.



2010
President Pete Stewart (R) with Board member John Caywood (L) at the Idaho WSF banquet.



2014
Scot Jenkins, Dr. Sri and Zach Higgins attending the Tri-State event.

GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF FULL DAIRY & FEEDLOT CONSTRUCTION

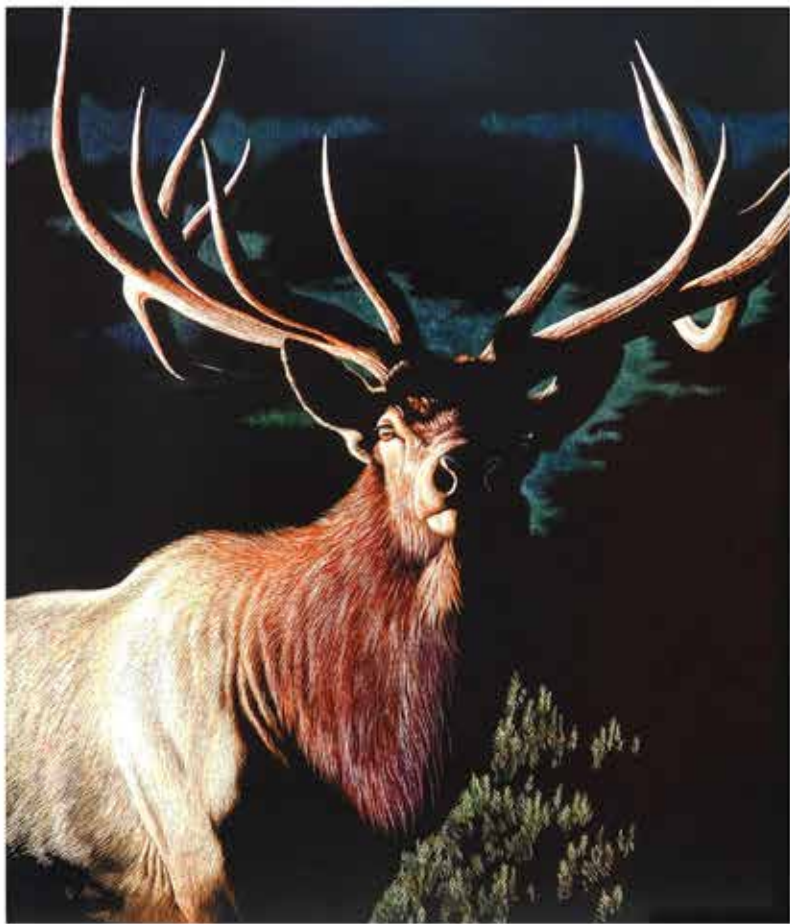
CUSTOM WELDING/REPAIR SHOP

KUHN & JAMESWAY



Supporting
Wildlife Conservation





Cynthia Fisher

www.Cynthiasoriginals.com

"I work in 8 mediums, depicting any and all types of wildlife"

cynthicart@gmail.com



1 TRUSTED OUTFITTER

DIAMOND OUTFITTERS

Dan Allen
SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL HUNTER OF THE YEAR

ARIZONA

ARIZONA BIG TEN

2 OUTFITTING SOLUTIONS

DIAMOND OUTFITTERS

ELK | MULE DEER | COUES DEER
PRONGHORN ANTELOPE | BISON
ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP
DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP | GOULD'S TURKEY
BLACK BEAR | MOUNTAIN LION

**Let Us Equip Your Hunt
BEST OF THE WEST ARIZONA
IS NOW OPEN!**

DISCOUNTS ON...

- Best of the West Rifles
- Huskemaw Scopes, Optics & Accessories
- Diamond Outfitter's Swag
- Long Range Rifle Marksmanship Courses (Inquire for Dates)

VETERAN OWNED AND OPERATED

Largest Full-Time GUIDE SERVICE In The SOUTHWEST

DiamondOutfitters.com
520.730.8147

ZOF

ZERO OUTFITTER FEES

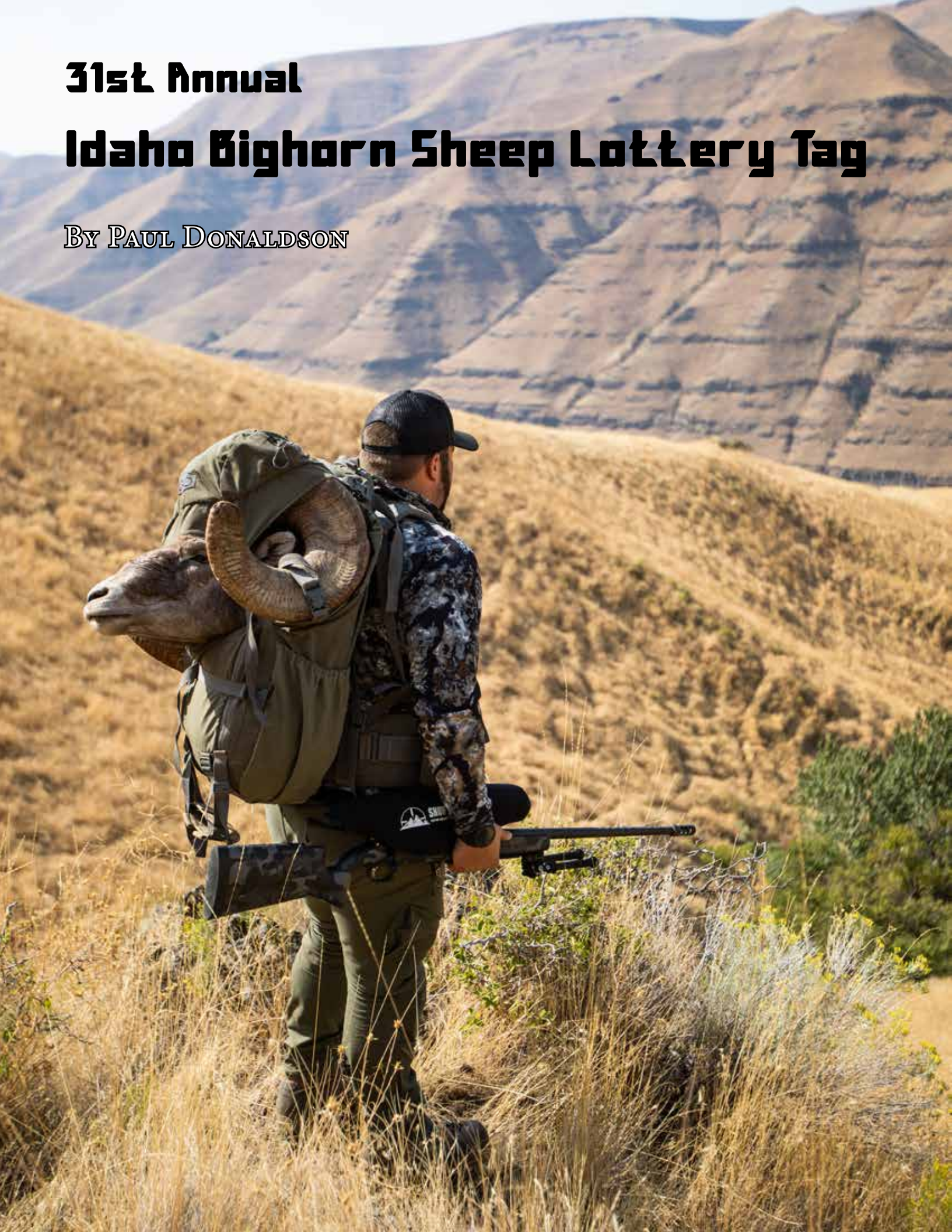
ONLY \$399 PER YEAR

DRAW YOUR PREMIUM TAG and YOUR GUIDED HUNT IS ON US

ZeroOutfitterFees.com
520.730.8147

31st Annual Idaho Bighorn Sheep Lottery Tag

BY PAUL DONALDSON



During the winter of 2022, I once again attended the Wild Sheep Foundation's annual gathering more affectionately known as the "Sheep Show" in Reno, Nevada. This is an annual event I always look forward to; seeing friends, fellow hunters, and people who have come to be like family. We are also exhibiting at the Sheep Show with my company Snowy Mountain Rifle Company which has allowed me to build many great relationships with great people in the industry over the years. As always, I purchased a few hundred dollars' worth of Idaho statewide bighorn sheep lottery tickets.

Fast forward a few months. On a late July afternoon after work, I was getting my daughter ready to go to a family dinner. Having no idea, the drawing was being held that day, a sheep tag was the farthest thing from my mind. As we were getting ready to jump in my truck I grabbed my phone. I noticed I had several missed calls from Idaho numbers, plus friends in the outdoor industry. Not sure what was going on, I called back the first contact I recognized, Carter Swain of the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation. He proceeded to inform me I had been drawn for the 2022 Idaho bighorn sheep statewide lottery tag, which was open for the coveted Unit 11 in 2022.

The flood of emotions that followed is hard to convey in writing, however, overwhelming excitement followed.

Time to plan: dinner that night with my family gave me some time to think, talk and get my thoughts in order. The next day I received a phone call from Dan Blankenship with Sheep Mountain Outfitters (SMO). I had previously been introduced to Dan at the Sheep Show. After some conversation and numerous friends telling me Dan and SMO were absolutely the outfitter to go with the decision was easy and I booked with Dan.

Time to Prepare: at this point, it was still hard to believe that I was going to be hunting bighorn sheep in Idaho in less than two months. I was blessed to already have a mountain goat hunt booked in Alaska for October. Thus, I had been hitting my hiking training hard all spring and summer. Since Snowy Mountain Rifle Company teaches a long-range shooting school, and I am one of the instructors this allows me to be well prepared in the shooting aspect of hunting. Dan spent these two months sending me lots of photos and videos of rams they had been watching over the last several years. This made it very hard to wait for opening weekend, however,

'SHEEP ADDICTION



IS REAL'

we made the decision to wait until mid-September to hunt, letting the temperatures of Hells Canyon cool off a bit.

Time to Hunt: Finally, it was September 18th, and I would be traveling to meet Dan and the SMO crew the next morning. We left bright and early the next morning, September 19th. The anticipation built during the entire 8-hour drive. Finally, we arrived to meet Dan. After a short drive to camp, meeting everyone, and getting settled in Dan said let's go look for sheep. I could not grab my gear fast enough! After a drive and a short hike, we were glassing for sheep. It did not take long to start spotting some ewes, but Dan had a target ram he had been seeing in that area. After an hour or so of glassing, we spotted a smaller ram that had been seen with the target ram; excitement was building! The target ram finally stood up and gave us a look at him. This ram was an instant no-brainer; I wanted this ram! We got to watch him for over an hour from several miles away before it got dark. The pure excitement I saw from the entire SMO crew confirmed my thoughts on just how special this ram was. We headed back to camp for a long night of anticipation, lack of sleep, and nothing but that ram on our minds.

The next morning we were up early for breakfast and coffee then headed up the river at first light to a spot we had picked to glass for the ram. We were able to locate the ram shortly after light; he was with two other rams, a young ram, and a beautiful dark-horned 180-class ram. We watched the sheep for over an hour as they worked to their morning beds. We made a plan for a stalk and off we went up the steep Hells Canyon mountainside. An hour or so later we made it to the spot we thought we could crawl over the ridge top and be in position for a shot. Dan crawled first to look and sure enough there were the rams right where we had left them. We moved up the mountainside another 50 feet to where we had cover from a rock outcropping. I crawled to the rocks, and set up my tripod knowing I would need to use it to gain elevation to shoot over the tall grass. I slid my rifle into the tripod and slowly pulled myself up to a kneeling position behind the rifle. The ram was still in his bed perfectly broadside to me at 300 yards. As I settled in behind the rifle and got steady the other two rams spotted us and stood up. Soon, our target ram got nervous. I slowly squeezed the trigger and with one well-placed shot, the ram never left his bed!

Time to enjoy and reflect; absolutely nothing can explain the





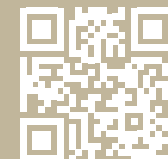
feeling I had upon walking up to that ram and getting to pick him up! Truly a ram of a lifetime and an incredibly overwhelming hunting experience. The next several hours were spent

taking photos, celebrating, and preparing to take him off the mountain. I am not sure when I will get to hunt sheep again, but one thing is for sure, the sheep addiction is real!



- CUSTOM RIFLES**
- SMITH SHOP**
- LONG RANGE ACADEMY**
- OPTICS**
- RIFLE COMPONENTS**
- RELOADING ACCESSORIES**

www.snowymountainrifles.com



HUNTSMO.com
OREGON
IDAHO
MEXICO





SAVE THE DATE

July 28 2023

IDAHO WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION

IDAHO BIGHORN LOTTERY TAG DRAWING

AND

SUMMER SOCIAL

With special guest Hollie Miyasaki, IDFG Wildlife Staff Biologist

EVENTS IN

IDAHO FALLS—Elks Lodge, 640 E Elva St, Idaho Falls

BOISE —Powderhaus Brewing, 9719 W. Chinden Blvd., Garden City

LEWISTON —Shooters Sports Bar, 1618 Main St., Lewiston

RAFFLE'S AT EACH LOCATION

REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED. ALL ARE WELCOME.

JOIN US FOR FUN, RAFFLES AND THE IDAHO BIGHORN LOTTERY TAG DRAWING.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest updates

IDAHO BIGHORN LOTTERY TAG



ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME RULE IS WAIVED FOR THIS TAG



IDAHO IS PRODUCING SOME *INCREDIBLE* RAMS STATEWIDE. ALL PHOTOS ARE RAMS FROM DIFFERENT UNITS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

FRANK CHURCH RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS

MAIN SALMON RIVER

OWYHEE RANGE

HELLS CANYON

MIDDLE FORK SALMON

LOST RIVER RANGE

EAST FORK SALMON

GUIDELINES

- The 2023 Lottery Tag is valid for use in any open controlled bighorn hunt, except Unit 11.
- "Tickets" are controlled hunt applications.
- Ticket purchasers and persons named on tickets must be at least 18 years old and must be eligible to hold a hunting license in Idaho.
- This tag (and hunting license if needed) will only be issued to an eligible applicant (the person named on the ticket drawn).
- The tag is non-transferrable.
- Drawing will be conducted July 28, 2023.
- **ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME RULE IS WAIVED FOR THIS TAG.**
- Need not be present to win.
- Tickets are void where the ticket/tag sale is prohibited.
- NO LIMIT to number purchased.
- Additional rules apply.
- Deadline to enter is July 24, 2023.

TICKETS

1 FOR \$20 • 6 FOR \$100 • 14 FOR \$166.75 • 25 FOR \$250. No limit.

Purchase tickets online at www.idahowildsheep.org

Together we can.

Washington Trust is proud to support our local community.



23-SIDCB-509650

GSM

GEM STATE MECHANICAL, INC.

- EXCAVATION
- FABRICATION
- HIGH-PURITY PIPING
- MECHANICAL PIPING
- MEDICAL GAS PIPING
- PLUMBING
- PROCESS PIPING
- PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTOR
- RADIANT HEAT / SNOW MELT
- SANITARY / DAIRY PIPING
- SEPTIC SYSTEMS
- SERVICE WORK (PLUMBING / HVAC)

Serving the Treasure Valley, Magic Valley, McCall and Cascade areas

208-465-0436

Supporting wildlife conservation in Idaho



ULTRALIGHT HUNTING GEAR



argalioutdoors.com

HOBY@DEADLINEOUTFITTERS.COM



**Southern Idaho UNIT 54: Offering fully guided.
Moose, Elk, Mule Deer, Antelope & Mtn. Lion Hunts!**
VISIT US AT www.deadlineoutfitters.com #208-421-1668



SOUTH HILLS LODGE
IDAHO UPLAND GAME HUNTING AT ITS BEST



Your Hosts
The Gartner's

Preserve Pheasant hunts – Wild Bird Hunts in Unit 54



Private Hunting Preserver 2,800 acres - Custom Packages!



Guest will enjoy our first class 5 bedroom, 3 bath hunting Lodge!
Drinks, Appetizers and Excellent home cooked meals provided.

Contact us today

www.southhillslodge.com
208-421-1668 or 208-421-0067



MESQUITE MOUNTAIN OUTFITTERS

Join Mesquite Mountain Outfitters down in Sonora, Mexico for a variety of hunts including coues deer, goulds turkey, free range bison, and desert bighorn sheep. In business since 2017, we have helped hundreds of clients successfully and safely fulfill their dreams of hunting almost every species in Sonora, Mexico.

With a long track record of successful trips and an awesome team, you are in safe hands. We obtain all your paperwork, tags, and gun permit to enter and exit Mexico worry free.

Coues Deer

\$6,500
7 days fully outfitted (2 days travel)
Travel time 1-2 hours from Tucson
98% success rate
Trophy quality 100" - 130"

Desert Bighorn Sheep

\$65,000
Free Range
12 days fully outfitted (2 days travel)
Travel time 3.5 hours from Tucson
100% success
Trophy quality 160"-175"

Bison

Bull \$10,000 or Cow \$7,000
Free Range
*Ovis Club recognizable for Big 29 Slam
7 days fully outfitted (2 days travel)
Travel time 3 hours from Tucson
100% success rate

Gould's Turkey

\$3,000
5 days fully outfitted (2 travel)
Travel time 2-5 hours from Tucson
98% success rate
Additional birds \$1,500

*All hunts include travel to and from Tucson, food and drinks, trophy importation

MESQUITE MOUNTAIN OUTFITTERS

520-490-0093

team@mmohunts.com

www.mmohunts.com

THE DECISIONS OF A SHEEP HUNTER

BY DIRK MENDIVE

The western sky was an ominous gray. Cold wind buffeted my uncle Randy and I as we climbed the steep slope ascending from the eastern edge of the Salmon River's Middle Fork. It was clear that the favorable weather we had thus far experienced that week was changing rapidly. Across the river, a small band of ewes and lambs grazed peacefully on the western slope. They were some distance away and unbothered by our presence. Somewhere below us, my father (Ron) and uncle Kim manned our riverside camp waiting and hoping to hear of my success.

Randy and I continued our climb, pausing periodically to glass and catch our breath. We were all hopeful that this would be the day I filled my Idaho Rocky Mountain Sheep tag. There was reason for optimism. Some elk hunters we encountered earlier in the week shared that they always see rams where we were now hunting. The previous day we had also identified four rams in the adjacent upriver drainage.

But after lengthy and serious consideration, I decided to pass on the biggest of the four. Although the most mature, he was still very young and lacked the size I wanted.

It was not my custom to pass on a legal animal. Growing up hunting deer and elk in North Idaho, one learns not to be too greedy. But drawing a sheep tag is a special opportunity. I didn't want to harvest just any legal sheep. I was hoping for a mature ram in at least the 160-inch range, and preferably the 170-inch range. Twenty-two years earlier, Kim harvested a 175-inch ram in the same hunt unit. I was hoping for a similar outcome.

Eventually, Randy and I reached a large rock covered bench with enough timber and foliage to provide good

cover. It seemed an ideal spot to encounter sheep. I was ready when movement caught my eye and the landscape exploded with sound and activity. A herd of elk spooked and was quickly vacating the area. I just stood there. It's always great to see elk. But I was hoping for a different species.

It was now early Thursday afternoon. Our hunt had started the previous Saturday and we had to be home by Sunday evening. That meant I had two full days remaining and my optimism was starting to wane. Perhaps today wasn't going to be my day...



This was not my first endeavor into the wilderness seeking to fill my tag. In late August, my uncle Rich flew my dad and I into the Soldier Bar airstrip. From there, I was able to hunt my unit's southernmost portion during opening weekend. The weather was hot, and a nearby wildfire filled the air with smoke. It wasn't ideal hunting conditions. But we were still able to locate a very young ram.

I glassed him hard

hoping he was part of a bachelor group that included a mature animal. But no other sheep were identified.

Much effort and exertion were expended that first hunt. While we had a memorable and exciting time, the trip reinforced the challenges associated with accessing my unit. But my dad and Rich also learned some interesting information. They encountered someone on the trail who suggested that we could rent a raft from a local community college. It was an intriguing idea. But since we weren't really experienced or equipped for a rafted hunt, it seemed unlikely. Yet it was another option.

Once home, I was uncertain of how best to proceed. Since the season had just started, I decided to wait

Few people experience the opportunity to pursue a Bighorn Ram. Being in such a rugged and beautiful landscape supported by family dedicated to my success was truly a blessing. Regardless of whether I ultimately filled my tag, I had no reason for frustration and discouragement.

until the weather changed before returning to the Middle Fork country.

Weeks passed and plans were devised and changed and then remade. But no great strategy emerged. Meanwhile, the season was passing and the urgency to get back to the wilderness and hunt sheep was ever present. So, after several weeks, my dad and I loaded his two horses and headed south from Coeur d'Alene. Our intention was to access the upper elevations of my unit via horse. Still, it was a ten plus mile journey from the nearest high-altitude trailhead to my hunt area boundary. But it seemed our best current option.

We never made it to the trailhead. An early October rainstorm brought snow to the high country of the Frank Church wilderness. Considering the situation, we decided against driving to an elevation of 8400' and packing in with the horses.

It was a cold and rainy afternoon as my dad, and I stood at the confluence of the Main and Middle Fork of the Salmon River considering our next move. It was at that moment that we both reached the same conclusion. The best chance to fill my tag was going to be by raft. We headed north with horses in tow to plan one last hunt.

The trip had to be organized quickly as there was little time to spare. Thankfully, the local community college had a raft available for rent. We also purchased a comprehensive river guidebook for the Middle Fork as neither my dad nor I had experience on that water. Lastly, we secured a flight from Salmon airport into a Forest Service landing strip on the river's lower end. Fortunately, preparations came together better and smoother than I expected.

With my dad in need of both knees replaced, climbing those steep slopes to hunt with me was not an option. So, I reached out to my uncle Kim. It was by raft that he harvested his ram back in 1985. I was grateful for his willingness to join another sheep hunt in the same unit where he found success.

My uncle Randy had been applying for sheep since the mid-1980s but had yet to draw. He was also asked to join the hunt. Initially he declined as he was planning a mid-October elk hunt. But some unexpected changes occurred, and he joined our party a few days before departure. There was some question if one sixteen-foot raft would accommodate four guys and their gear. But we were committed to finding out!

As Randy and I stood there watching the elk disappear, the pressure on me was starting to build. Randy set up to glass a short distance away. I also started glassing but was more focused on my previous day's decision to pass on that young ram. Would it be best to harvest

a ram smaller than I wanted? Or wait and potentially leave my tag unfilled and hope for another chance someday? This question is not unique for hunters blessed with a once in a lifetime tag. But it was my decision and no one else's. That was new and unique for me. It was time that I answered that question conclusively.

With binoculars in hand, I reflected upon all the effort spent to bring me to my current vantage. There was the early trip into Soldier Bar, the foiled attempt with horses, and now our current trip down the Middle Fork.

The previous Friday evening, Randy, Kim, my dad, and I left Coeur d'Alene and drove through the night to make our early Saturday morning flight. We also dropped a pickup at the confluence, so we'd have transportation upon completing the trip. It was a long night.

In the days since, we were flown into the wilderness, had thus far traveled – and survived – roughly twenty river miles, and had hunted my unit hard. In fact, Kim hunted so hard the first day, his boots claimed both big toenails. Thus, he was now confined to camp.

Considering all the logistics, the expended resources, two lost toenails, four guys navigating the river in one very heavy 16' raft, and all the time and energy devoted by my dad and uncles, it seemed necessary to be successful. But, I also didn't want to settle. It was at that moment that I abandoned any thought of returning to the adjacent upriver drainage to try and harvest the ram I had passed on the day prior. My focus was renewed to find a nice ram that afternoon.

No sheep appeared to be in our current area. So, Randy and I continued to hunt as we climbed. Meanwhile, a storm continued to build and the declining temperature – accentuated by the brisk wind – prompted another decision. Should we establish a camp and continue hunting the same drainage in the morning? Or should we return to the river and hunt downstream? The afternoon was passing quickly, and I knew I needed to decide.

Despite my renewed efforts, no sheep were found. My optimism was all but extinguished. Between the discouragement and uncertain next steps, Randy and I paused and asked for some divine direction.

It was then, on a cold and blustery Thursday afternoon, that I stopped focusing on a desired outcome and instead



focused on the current reality. Few people experience the opportunity to pursue a Bighorn Ram. Being in such a rugged and beautiful landscape supported by family dedicated to my success was truly a blessing. Regardless of whether I ultimately filled my tag, I had no reason for frustration and discouragement. Instead, gratitude and humility were the rightful emotions. The change in perspective was liberating and allowed me to concentrate on enjoying my experience – and to be at peace regardless of the outcome.

Since we couldn't reach base camp by radio, I made the decision according to what I had felt all along. It was time to return to the river.

Just after midnight, I was awakened to the sound of rain hitting our tent. Conditions had not changed by morning. It was a wet and gloomy day with the snowline just above us.

The four of us gradually broke camp and loaded the raft. I figured the day was lost. Between the weather and our need to travel downstream, I didn't expect much hunting to occur. My hope was to establish another camp somewhere and have Saturday for my final effort. The thought of setting up another camp with all our wet gear was not desirable, however.

We launched into the current once again and started navigating downriver watching for sheep when able. Randy was positioned to the bow's starboard side. He had the best vantage to watch the river's eastern side – my unit. But the conditions and visibility were not ideal. Between the steady rain and some unruly waves, we were all soaked.

It was midafternoon as we neared Roaring Creek. I was hopeful we could find a good campsite so we could hunt that drainage for our last day. As we prepared for our next challenging rapid Randy made a shocking declaration. "There's sheep!"

I immediately turned and stared at Randy in disbelief, waiting intently for his next words. "They're rams!" he continued.

My dad spotted them next, believing them to be nicer than anything we had previously encountered. Neither Kim nor I saw them, but that could wait. We needed to get our raft to shore immediately.

A group of three rams was on the river's eastern slope. A decent ram with nice length was bedded down. He was

wide but not very heavy. A smaller ram fed near him. The third ram was browsing a little further down the canyon. I briefly surveyed the first two rams and then tried to get the spotting scope unpacked from the raft. The rain and fog made glassing more challenging.

Randy was focused on the third ram slightly downriver. Kim went to consult with Randy as my dad and I contemplated whether I should try a stalk or if I could make a shot from the shoreline. Considering the situation, we both concluded that I was best to shoot from there.

Both Kim and Randy recommended the ram slightly downcanyon. "That's the one I'd shoot," Randy said quietly. That was all I needed to hear. In fact, I never even put my binoculars on him.

There was a semi-flat rock positioned such that I decided to use it as a rest. I laid on my back next to it and utilized my backpack and some life jackets to reach an acceptable elevation. My rifle was pointed almost vertically.

Kim provided the distance. The ram was at 356 yards quartering away from me as he slowly fed down canyon. I intently watched and waited for my shot. "Just relax," Kim said. "We'll let you know when you have a shot."

The rain continued to fall, and time seemed to stand still. I didn't want to wait too long and miss my opportunity. But I didn't want to rush things either.

Then he took another step. Instead of facing almost completely away from me he now presented a decent quartering away broadside opportunity. I recognized it immediately and pulled myself tight to my rifle. "Well, there's your sho..." Kim started to say.

Minutes, maybe less, since I first positioned myself on the rock, my rifle shattered the wilderness quiet on that rainy Friday, October afternoon. Upon recovering from the recoil, I immediately brought the crosshairs back to the location where I'd last seen the ram. He was gone. "I think you hit him," Kim said. "I think you missed him," my dad said almost simultaneously. "This is helpful," I thought to myself.

I reloaded and we all spent several tense seconds in silence waiting for some indication. Then another sound reached



our ears. It was a mini rockslide caused by my ram rolling down the hill. It seemed that my bullet had found its target.

There was a flood of emotion; relief, excitement, thankfulness, and tremendous respect for an amazing animal that I was fortunate enough to harvest. I was met with congratulations and jubilation from my hunting partners. "I thought you hit him," Kim said. "It looked like he reacted when you shot." "Yeah, I was afraid you missed him," my dad said. "I saw the bullet hit the hillside then he turned and disappeared. But that's because he was already down."

After collecting ourselves, we started our ascent to recover my ram. The other two Bighorns watched us briefly before disappearing into the cliffs above them. It took a bit to reach him, but we all made it. Despite my doubts and discouragement, I now stood next to what I had hoped for all along – a mature ram.

After some pictures, we dressed the ram and slowly carried it down to the raft. It was now late afternoon. We were all thoroughly soaked, and no one wanted to camp another night in the rain. We loaded the ram, strapped things down once again and headed downriver.

Our last leg was not without its challenges, but we were able to make the confluence minutes before dark. It was a fitting end to our journey.

A couple months later, I was able to get my ram scored at a regional outdoor show. I smiled when I read the official measurements: 169 7/8. You can't get a nicer 160-inch ram than that! But I'm alright rounding up to 170.

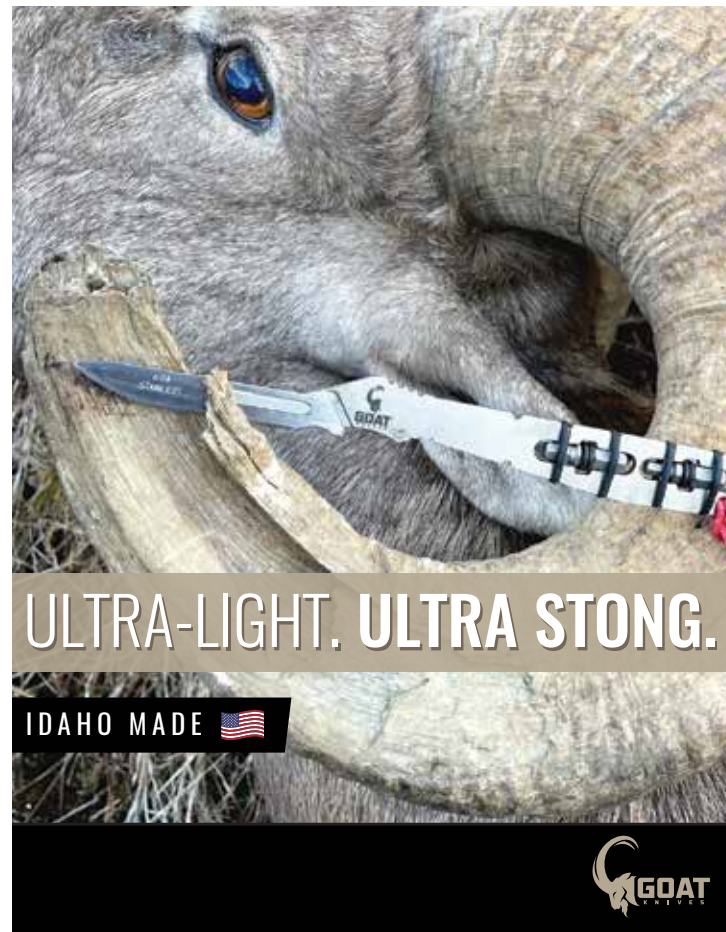




www.southernmountainadventures.com

Wanaka, New Zealand

+64 27 208 9053



ULTRA-LIGHT. ULTRA STONG.

IDAHO MADE



EXO MTN GEAR

MADE IN IDAHO, USA

ALL NEW K4 PACK SYSTEMS

BUILT TO PERFORM — We spent more than three years obsessively designing, prototyping, and testing the K4 Frame to achieve ultimate performance.

BUILT TO FIT — With 5 belt sizes, 4 frame heights, customizable lumbar foam and a micro-adjustable torso, the K4 Frame offers a personalized fit.

BUILT TO ADAPT — One frame with multiple configurations. K4 Pack Systems offer interchangeable bag sizes (3600, 5000, and 7200) and an integrated load shelf that is ready to haul heavy loads at a moment's notice.

BUILT TO LAST — Every component of the K4 System is built for hard use and is backed by our lifetime guarantee.

Scan with your phone's camera to learn more...

EXO MTN GEAR.com

NWT DREAM HUNT GIVEAWAY

JERRY HERROD

WIN



WSF is sending one lucky winner on an epic Dall's Sheep Hunt in Northwest Territories with the outfitter of their choice:

- Arctic Red River
- Canol Outfitters
- Gana River
- MacKenzie Mtn.
- Nahanni Butte
- NWT Outfitters
- South Nahanni Butte
- Raven's Throat



SCAN FOR FULL DETAILS

SPECTACULAR NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



Join WSF or renew for \$45, or upgrade your membership and you're in the drawing. **WANT MORE CHANCES?** Purchase up to 5 additional chances for \$50 ea. Deadline is June 30, 2023 • Drawing will be July 17, 2023

OUR WINNER ALSO WILL RECEIVE "THE ULTIMATE MOUNTAIN GAME GEAR KIT" FROM OUR PARTNERS





DOUBLE TROUBLE

By Carter Swain

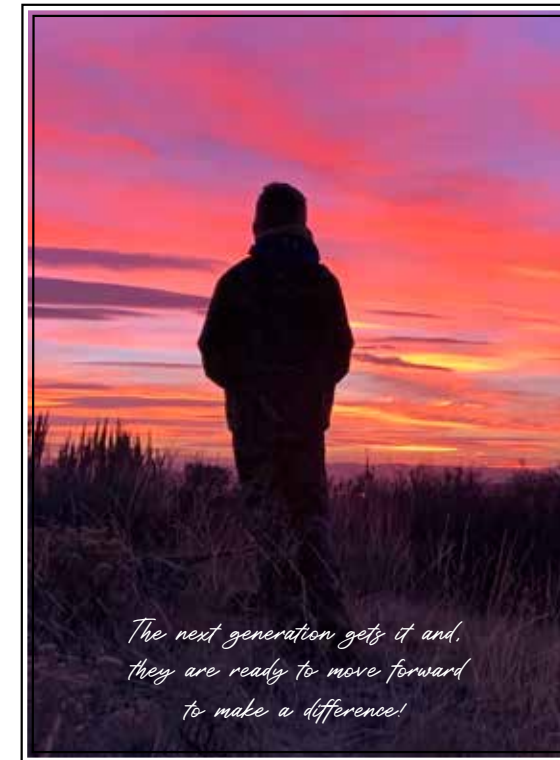
Spending time in the outdoors and hunting with my kids over the years has been one of the highlights of my life. That said, when both teenage kids (Hallie 16, and Zach 14) drew the same coveted bull elk tag in the same year it created some light anxiety for a dad tasked with tying it all together.

We scouted throughout the summer and early fall finding a decent crop of bulls. Teenage bantering increased and expectations were running high going into the mid-October opener. As opening day approached, our camp was set and everything was put into motion for a great adventure. The night before the opener we agreed that it would be unproductive for us to create a competitive situation and we would opt for carrying one gun on each hunt supporting each other and rotating who was the hunter on each outing. A high-stakes game of rock, paper, scissors in the wall tent the night before the opener determined Hallie would have the gun for opening morning.

After a restless night's sleep, opening morning arrived and we set out with high expectations. We targeted a group of elk we had scouted which had a couple of nice bulls. The elk were very active on opening morning moving through the trees and offering no opportunities for a good shot. The next few days presented opportunities for smaller bulls but they both held back hoping for an opportunity at some of the bigger bulls we had been seeing.

On day four Zach had to head back for some school responsibilities, which left Hallie and me in camp to continue the hunt. The next day we found a bull we had never seen before. He had a club horn off his right side. Hallie had to make a quick decision and decided to pass on the Club Horn bull. Zach made it back to camp for day seven. We told him about the Club Horn bull, and the idea of a once-in-a-lifetime unique club horn bull

immediately drew Zach's attention. We headed out to the area we had last seen Club Horn. We worked the area, covering country, glassing, and looking for any sign of elk. We found a small group of cows grazing along a tree line and decided to hang tight watching to see if a bull showed up. As we were laying on the hillside glassing, Zach spotted a bull moving through the edge of the timber and thought it may be Club Horn. As the bull cleared the tree line, we were able to confirm it was Club Horn and there was no doubt that was the bull Zach wanted. After a single shot, the bull was down. When we got to the bull, it was very overwhelming; my son had just taken an incredibly unique bull with my daughter and me there to support him. Emotions ran high and the evening was incredible.



The next generation gets it and they are ready to move forward to make a difference!

The next day we packed Zach's bull out as a powerful storm moved through the area, starting with rain and turning into the first significant snowstorm of the year. With several inches of snow on the ground by the next morning, we regrouped and focused on how to find Hallie a bull in the changing weather conditions. The next day took us back to the same area in which we started the season. We found the elk had moved out of the area and were gathering up in bigger herds, preparing for migration. We were too

far behind the herd to catch up, so we had to shift tactics and make a move. By midday, we moved to a new area and found a group of bulls on the move. One of the bulls was an incredible bull, Hallie said it was the bull of her dreams! A few minutes later our season was over, Hallie had harvested an amazing bull, making our season an incredible success and fulfilling the dreams of everyone involved.

Remarkably we came out of the hunt with two amazing bulls, everyone thrilled with the outcome, and a dad feeling like he had somehow succeeded. Brother and sister were there to support each other throughout



the hunt and had a great time hunting and spending time together. Looking back and reflecting on all the time spent and conversations had, I'm sure the future of hunting and

conservation is bright. The next generation gets it and they are ready to move forward to make a difference!



TREASURE VALLEY'S LARGEST LIBERTY SAFE DEALER!

IN-HOUSE LOCAL DELIVERY!



Al's
Pawn & Gun INC

5602 Cleveland Blvd., Caldwell

208-454-8038

MONDAY-FRIDAY
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

SATURDAY
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

alslibertysafe.com

MEMBERS GET QUALITY TAGS & HUNTS



FOR **\$150 PER YEAR** OBTAIN BETTER

DRAW TAGS
LANDOWNER TAGS
DIY HUNTS
GUIDED HUNTS



—The Western Big Game Experts™

epicoutdoors.com

MENTION THIS AD AND GET A DISCOUNT
ON OPTICS & TRAIL CAMS!

Call us at 435-263-0777 for special pricing

AUTHORIZED DEALER



THE LEGENDARY STAN POTTS

Stan Potts received a standing ovation at the 38th Idaho WSF Banquet & Fundraiser. Idaho WSF Past President, Jim Warner, presented Stan with a plaque to honor his legendary contribution to bighorn sheep in Idaho.



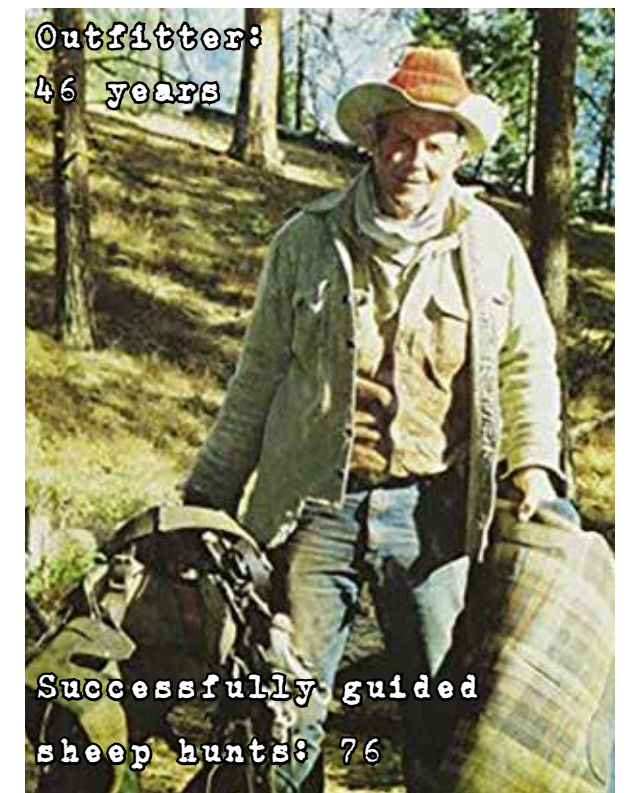
LIFE MEMBER #4

Purchased the very first lottery tag.



Governor Cecil Andrus signs the 1987 bill authorizing the first bighorn sheep tag to be sold at auction. Pictured with Andrus, left to right, are Jerry Conley, Mike Best, Ken Norrie, Joy & Stan Potts, Burk Mantel, Harold Eschelmann, and Dr. Bob DiGrazia.

Outfitter:
46 years



Successfully guided
sheep hunts: 76

PERFORMANCE

Dry Wall INC

Full-service residential and commercial drywall Subcontractor.

Drywall hanging
Taping and texturing
Patches and repairs
Acoustical ceilings
Steel stud framing
Epoxy floor painting
and more...

'Quality and Service' at a competitive price.

Recognized as an industry leader, with experience and expertise in Single Family Residential, Commercial Construction and Multi Family Residential.

- ✓ 5 Year Warranty on Workmanship
- ✓ Every Project is Run by a Team of Experts
- ✓ We Save You Time, Money, and Space

**FOUNDED IN 1970,
OUR COMPANY
HAS BEEN IN BUSINESS
FOR 50 YEARS**

208-468-9603

info@performance-drywallinc.com

www.performance-drywallinc.com



2023 Outstanding Achievement Award

MIKE SCHLEGEL



Mike Schlegel was presented the 2023 Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation "Outstanding Achievement Award." Mike exemplifies the term of outstanding in his exceptional work ethic and the depth of his knowledge, skills, and ability he brings in safeguarding and expanding Idaho's bighorn resource. Mike's career with Idaho Fish and Game spanned over three decades, with much of that career dedicated to a multitude of management activities benefitting bighorn sheep for the lower Salmon population. For many years after retirement, Mike worked as a "netgunner" for a private helicopter contractor capturing bighorn across numerous western states. Those activities included capturing animals for relocation, collecting vital medical samples and outfitting bighorn with telemetry collars for management purposes. Post retirement, Mike has contracted to conduct big game helicopter surveys for Idaho Fish and Game, he has been affiliated with Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation since its inception, continues to serve on the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation Board of Directors and plays a vital role on the Conservation Committee. Those activities include representing Idaho WSF on the Hells Canyon Initiative, responding to land management agencies and developing comments regarding land use plans insuring bighorn needs are addressed, writing a grant application to secure a conservation easement in lower Hells Canyon, secured funding for domestic sheep farm flock testing and culling program, and continues to help facilitate domestic sheep mitigation measures on landscapes where they pose a risk to bighorn.

Mike has not slowed his pace into his retirement years and his contribution to Idaho's wildlife and bighorn sheep is unmatched. He is a consummate professional and Idaho's bighorn and other wildlife resources are the benefactor of his many years of dedicated work.



JIM JEFFRESS

SILENCE MADE SIMPLE

ONLY \$199 DOWN

888-781-8778

CALL NOW TO CLAIM YOUR OFFER*

*OFFER NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE

NO INTEREST | NO FEES | PAY WHILE YOU WAIT
WE SHIP IT TO YOUR FRONT DOOR ONCE APPROVED



SILENCERCENTRAL.COM



Jim Jeffress was awarded the 2023 Outstanding Achievement award. Jim is very dedicated to bighorn sheep conservation. During his career with Nevada Game and Fish, he was very instrumental in improving bighorn sheep populations in NW Nevada. After retirement Jim moved to SW Idaho and joined Idaho WSF, serving on the conservation committee and served as president. After his board term he has continued to stay engaged with Idaho WSF, serving on the conservation committee.



Jim's work Kit Fisher, National Wildlife Federation, was instrumental in several terminations through allotment buy-outs and conversions. Due to Jim's persistence regarding domestic sheep allotments on the Ketchum District and the Sawtooth National Recreation Idaho WSF is in a position to challenge their calculations of the Risk of Contact model.

He has also stayed engaged with the Bighorn Advocates monthly telephone conference call and continues to serve as an Idaho WSF Associate board member.





PROOF[®]
Research



TUNDRA TI

BRINGING ADJUSTABILITY TO THE TIMELESS DESIGN OF A MONTE CARLO STYLE STOCK

THE TUNDRA TI SPORTS AN ADJUSTABLE TRIGGERTECH SPECIAL TRIGGER, BDL STYLE MAGAZINE, TITANIUM RECEIVER, CUT RIFLED CARBON FIBER BARREL, AND IS BACK BY OUR SUB 1/2 MOA ACCURACY GUARANTEE.



proofresearch.com / Columbia Falls, Montana / 406.756.9290

CAPTURE YOUR

Story





SILVERLINE
FILMS



Creating compelling narratives through video and photo, from hunting to commercial production.
SILVERLINEFILM.COM

CREATE YOUR

Adventure



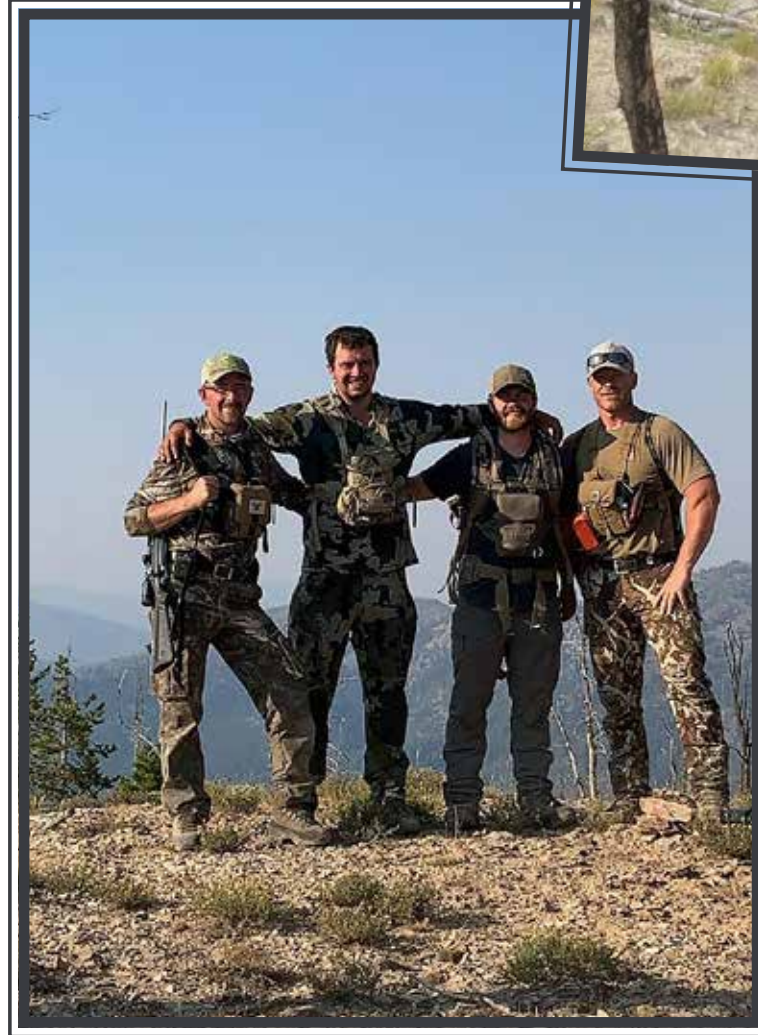
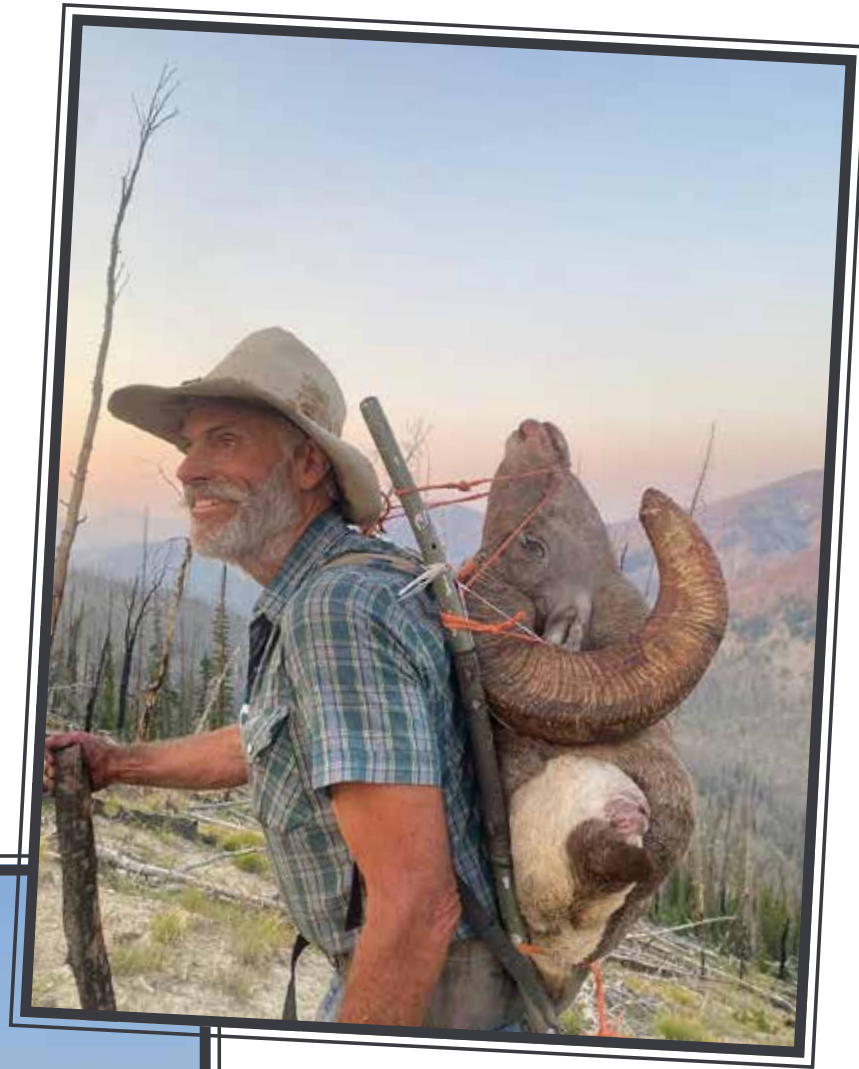
Experience remote Alaska, on Lake Clark, with premier lodging, fishing, hiking, and much more.
MYWILDERNESSPRO.COM



WildernessPro
Adventure With A Purpose

A Gentleman's Hunt

by Del Morton as told to Bill London



The letter said, "Successful". I couldn't believe it, after 40 years of applying for a bighorn sheep tag, I was 'successful'. Each place I lived, I had applied, Arizona, Nevada and now Idaho. I love the Idaho draw system. Everybody has the same chance.

When the actual tag arrived, I was really fired up. This was real. I'm basically a bow hunter so I borrowed my wife's Remington .270 rifle. I knew the hunt area well because my son Loren had killed a ram there a few years earlier, but my hunt would be different. This wouldn't be a remote backpacking hunt. I would be limited by a poorly healed broken ankle and little water in the area for my beloved horses. I was afoot and not going far. Knowing I'd be slow, I planned on going alone.

I spoke with Idaho Fish and Game biologist Sean Schroff out of their Salmon office. He had some tips on places to hunt with my limitations. Loren and I did some pre-season scouting and found a band of young rams not far into the unit. We then found a place for my wall tent only 100 yards from a knoll that let me glass that area. This was to be a gentleman's hunt with short hikes and a camp chair for glassing.

The season opener found me wearing my favorite hunting garb; denim jeans, a checkered shirt and a Stetson sitting in my camp chair glassing the country for sheep. I sat there in my chair for the first two days – dawn to dusk- with no sheep seen. The third day at first light I saw a glimpse of two smaller rams as they went around a ridge and into some timber. I wondered if they had a bigger ram with them.

Later a group of guys walked up my knoll to visit. Bryce Cordle was another bighorn hunter for the unit, and he brought along his two sons Noah and Brenten and a cousin Jason. They had been in Loon Creek, had seen some sheep but not killed anything. I told them that I had the entire season, and they were welcome to hunt anywhere they wished. Being gentlemen, they left the canyon in front of me alone and went elsewhere.

Later still, a grouse hunter with his bird dog walked up to visit. My knoll was sure a busy place that day. Anyway, this guy was really friendly and really loud. We're visiting and he's yelling. I was hoping he wouldn't spook the ram band I had seen earlier. I was wishing he would either quite down or head back down the knoll. He too was a gentleman and said he would hunt elsewhere to leave the area to me. That afternoon my buddy Terry surprised me by wandering up to my knoll. He had decided to join me and help with the hunt. That evening we saw three ewes and a young ram walk into the same timber as the ram band that morning.

The fourth morning found Terry and I sitting in our camp chairs trying to glass for rams, but a distant wildfire had filled the air with smoke making the whole venture difficult. We talked about an area where Loren had seen bighorn rams while deer hunting last year.

The fifth morning Terry dropped me off in the other area. The plan was to hike about a half mile to a glassing spot, so no need to bring much gear, food, or water. Right? While hiking up I spotted a ram a half mile away. He was by himself near a rock. I got behind a ridge and side hilled towards him. Of course, when I got there, he was gone. I slowly glassed the canyon looking for him when I spotted a half curl ram bedded in some burnt trees. It was about 8 am. Eventually I saw the tops of the backs of a larger set of horns ten yards behind the half curl. That ram was at 243 yards. Both rams were bedded looking away from me.

I proned out and set up my rifle for a shot. I just had to wait until the big ram stood up. It was September 2nd, it was hot, and there was no shade. I obviously didn't bring enough water. But I had a nice ram located and I wasn't going anywhere. Several times the smaller ram stood up, fed, and laid back down. Further down the canyon I spotted a band of eight smaller rams, all 1/2 to 3/4 curl. Finally, after six hours, at 2:30 pm the smaller ram walked over to the larger one and kicked him. The larger ram stood up and the two of them started butting heads! The crack of their collision echoed across the bowl to me.

The rams fed into the shade of a tree and bedded down at 220 yards. The small ram kept preventing a clear shot at the big one and when they bedded, sure enough he was still in front of the big one. That's the nice thing about having six weeks to hunt, no hurry. Two hours later, at 4:30 the sun was still there, but my water and snacks were gone. Suddenly both rams jumped up and ran towards me. At 190 yards they settled down and started to feed again. It seemed all I could see of the big ram was his head or his butt – no clear shots. Then it happened, he turned and offered a broadside shot. I had dreamed of this moment for 40 years. It was a lung and spine shot that dropped the ram and sent him rolling downhill.

The hike across the bowl and over a ridge to the ram took a while. Teary eyed, I walked up to the ram and thanked the Lord for the ram and for the hunt. I rolled the ram to a tree to process it, pausing to take my first ever 'selfie' of me with the ram. While cutting up the ram I looked up and saw four guys on a ridge watching me through their binoculars. They said something to me, but I couldn't understand them,



then they were gone.

Soon the four guys hiked back over the ridge with trekking poles and backpacks. It was Bryce and his group of young strong men. They jumped right in to help cut up the ram and then to help pack it out. As we hiked out Bryce explained that earlier in the day, they had spotted the same ram from two miles away, but when they hiked over, they saw me pruned out

watching it. Again, being gentlemen, they backed out of the area to let me have my hunt. Later they heard my shot and my victory yell. Then they knew I had killed the ram and they decided to hike over and give me a hand.

It's always nice to share a mountain with gentlemen.

Cover photo by Brenton Cordle.

HUNT

EXPERIENCE
IN NAMIBIA



Scan Here
FOR OUR DIGITAL
BROCHURE



OUR 6 NIGHT HUNTING PACKAGE
**5 HUNTING DAYS AND 6 NIGHTS IN CAMP*

INCLUDES:
1 X GEMSBOK, 1 X SPRINGBOK & 1 X BABOON
TOTAL PACKAGE PRICE:
ONLY \$1,900 USD

**GROUP LEADER
HUNTS FOR FREE***

(*TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY)

BOOK A HUNTING TRIP FOR A GROUP OF 4 HUNTERS, EXCL YOURSELF,
AND YOU, THE GROUP LEADER WILL HUNT FOR **FREE***



MAKE A BOOKING

NAMIBIAN MOBILE: +264 (0) 81 127 0906 | **USA MOBILE:** +1 (260) 466-4855

EMAIL: jaco@jsvdm.com | namibiasafaricorporation@gmail.com |
jaco@namibiasafaricorporation.com

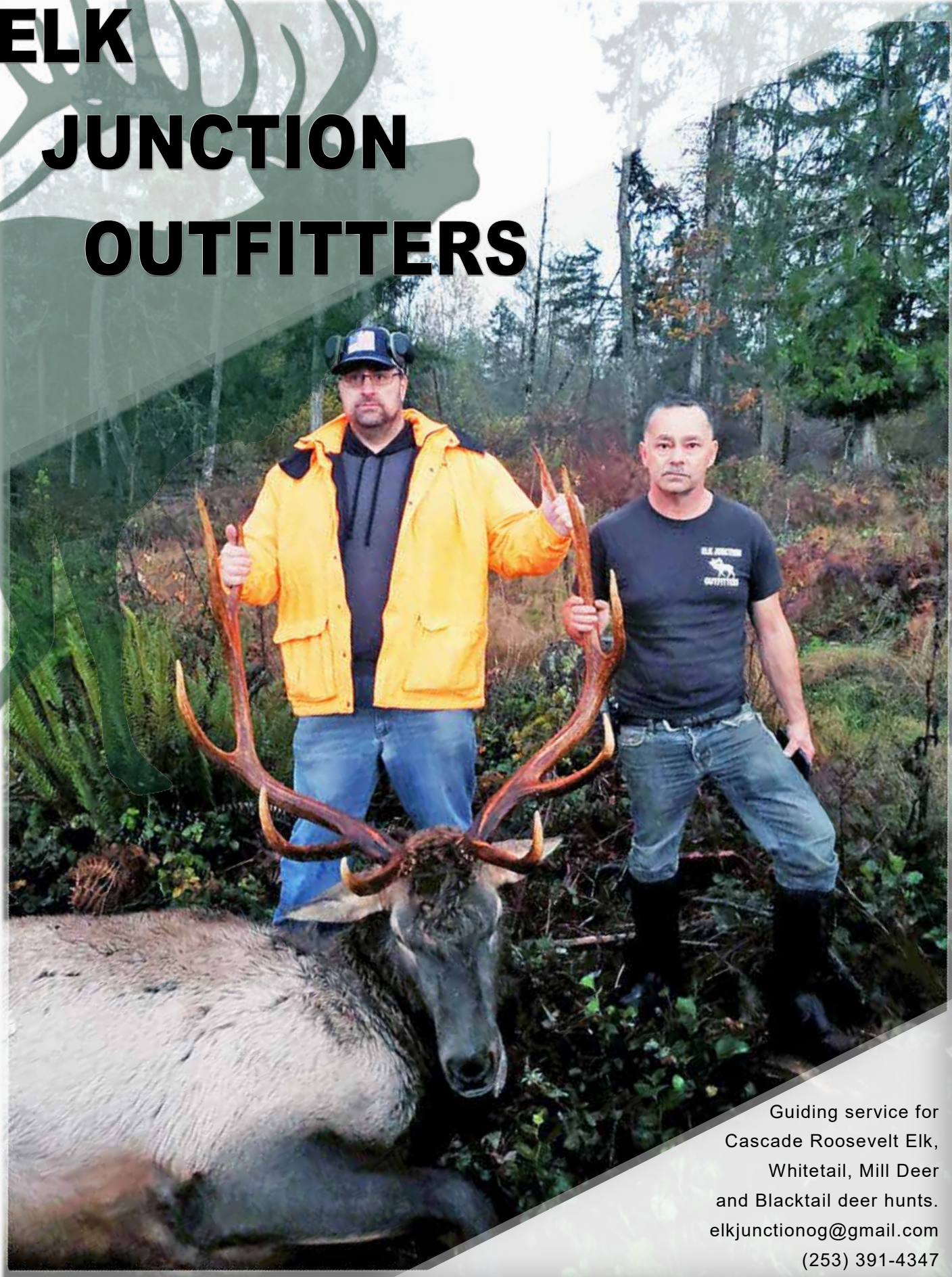
SKYPE: jacobusvandemerwe **ADDRESS:** PO BOX 336, Windhoek, Namibia

ALL PACKAGES INCLUDE:
AIRPORT PICK UP & RETURN
LODGING, FOOD & DRINKS
(ALCOHOL IN MODERATION)

EXCLUDES:
TIPS, TROPHY DIP AND PACK

BEST DEAL

ELK JUNCTION OUTFITTERS



Guiding service for
Cascade Roosevelt Elk,
Whitetail, Mill Deer
and Blacktail deer hunts.
elkjunctionog@gmail.com
(253) 391-4347



FIND YOUR PEAK™



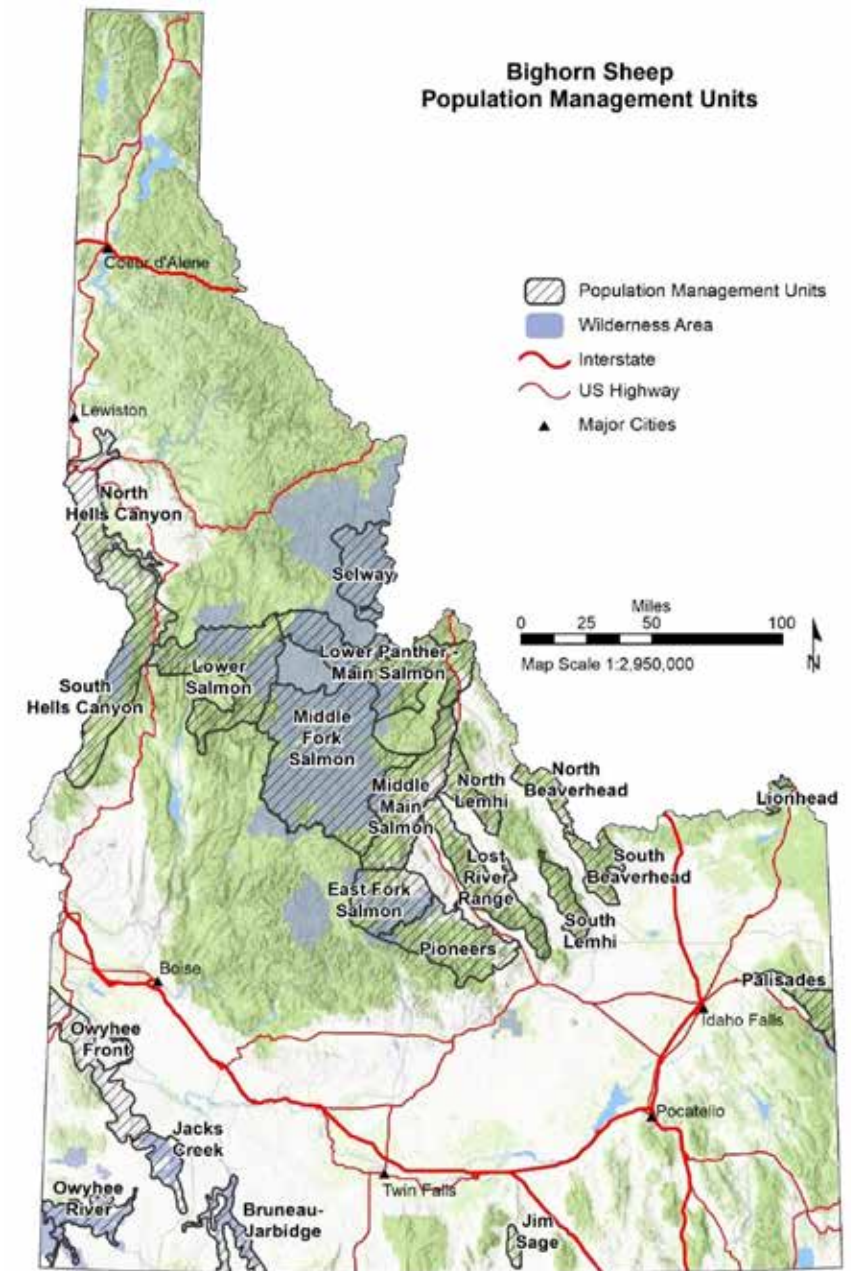
© 2021 Vortex Optics. All Rights Reserved. Vortex and Find Your Peak are trademarks of Vortex Optics.

SCAN TO *JOIN*
VORTEX NATION™



GOING BIG

BIGHORN SHEEP PROJECTS 2022/2023



BRUNEAU-JARBIDGE
November 12, 2022
Survey

OWYHEE FRONT
December 15, 2022
12 captured and collared

JACKS CREEK
December 16, 2022
27 captured and collared

JIM SAGE
December 17, 2022
15 captured and collared

NORTH HELLS CANYON
December 19, 2022
38 captured and collared

SOUTH BEAVERHEAD
March 3, 2023
16 captured and collared

LOWER PANTHER MAIN
SALMON
March 4-6, 2023
60 captured and collared

LOWER SALMON
March 7-8, 2023
16 captured and collared

SOUTH HELLS CANYON
March 10, 2023
13 captured and collared



Watch 'GOING BIG' video at www.idahowildsheep.org

MAIN SALMON

March 4-6, 2023

60 captured and collared

By: Hannah Warner

When I first began my hunting adventure, bighorn sheep were always discussed with such pride and prestige; how only the tenacious of hunters sheep hunt. Most who are privileged enough to sheep hunt, never look back and are forever sculpted by the drive to hunt sheep.

My first sheep hunt was with a 12-year-old whose family has now become my family. I will never forget sitting with his little brother playing 'stack the rocks' on the mountainside and we heard a gunshot. The day before, I went on one of the hardest hikes I have endured. I was climbing above the truck, looking down on the Salmon River and a wall of steep mountainside ahead of me. This was the day I realized that my upper extremities were just as important as my legs for propelling me both up and down the mountain. That was also the day I realized sheep hunting was not for the faint of heart.

The moment I looked into the spotting scope and saw my very first ram was something extraordinary; watching an animal lay so elegantly with curly horns that took up most of the frame is an image I will never be able to erase. Walking up to the ram was unimaginable, chills immediately filled my tired body with a 12-year-old ecstatic telling me, "Hurry Hannah, you need to come to touch him."

That first taste of sheep hunting has fueled me ever since. I finally truly understood the core importance and meaning behind Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation, other state organizations, Wild Sheep Foundation, and the importance of conservation. These animals are special and need to be protected and managed for current and future sheep hunters.

ID WSF was able to coordinate with Idaho Fish and Game to start sheep captures, I knew in my soul this was something I wanted to be a part of. My first day in the South Beaverhead mountains was the first time data was to be collected on



this sheep population. Volunteers from ID WSF along with biologists of IDFG were present, plus the helicopter capture crew. It was a blistering cold, windy, bluebird winter day at the beginning of March. Fearless and powerful; the pilot was something to be in awe of as the helicopter was first seen rounding the rocky steep hillside, landing in front of us. The mission for the day was to capture as many sheep as possible and collect health data. The day started slow but still very exciting, especially to witness the processing of the first couple of ewes. The moment I saw the red helicopter with four sheep slung from the bottom coming towards us, my heart began to beat faster. It was instinct to run towards the sheep to help take it to the tarp for data collection. The ewes were "hot," we had overheard on the radio. The way the team was able to coordinate with Hollie and Frances commanding four different teams to ensure the safety and health of the sheep was unbelievable. I ran up the mountain in two feet of snow to help release a young ewe. Tears swelled in my eyes as I watched her run away; I had just touched a live sheep. The team captured 16 sheep for data collection including nasal swabs, DNA testing, collaring, pregnancy, amount of body fat, and fecal samples.

On day two my head was in the game; I was ready to experience the sheep in the Lower Panther-Main Salmon population where my heart first experienced a sheep hunt. Hollie and Frances were delegating teams, looked at me, and asked me to be a data collector. Little did I know that is how I WOULD BE able to truly experience a sheep capture. I was involved in every aspect of the data IDFG collected; plus the high energy a "hot" sheep brings to the team.

On day three, I was ready to lay my hands on a live ram to feel the rush and excitement of what those curly horns would be like in my cold hands. The focus was still on the ewes. By day four, I realized the important statistics were not

about the rams, it is the females whose health is vital to the herd. Without the ewes, the population is incapable of maintaining and/or increasing, especially if Movi is detected. Movi in bighorn sheep results in a high risk of pneumonia. I was able to coordinate with one of the IDFG biologists, whose specialty is ewe health, including pregnancy and fat. Seeing an ultrasound with a baby sheep was beyond unbelievable!

On day 4, Monday, the goal was to get 60 sheep in the lower Salmon Region. By noon, after the helicopter was bringing in multiple three strings of ewes at a time the goal was completed. The rush of seeing the helicopter winding through rocky cliffs and steep mountainsides never got old. Where I was breathless on a mountainside in sheep country, it was seemingly effortless for the pilot and his muggers to be there.

Overall, my perspective of the importance of sheep conservation was significantly altered after my first sheep hunt, but even more so after being a part of the capture and learning everything that goes into maintaining the health of sheep populations, plus the conservation effort required to be able to hunt sheep. After that weekend, my love and passion for bighorn sheep grew tenfold. After this experience, I became aware of how incredible bighorn sheep are.



SITKA



BREATHE, BLOCK, STRETCH & MOVE

NEW MOUNTAIN EVO JACKET



Built for high-exertion backcountry pursuits, the Mountain Evo Jacket uses strategically body-mapped fabrics to provide windproof protection where you need it most while also allowing exceptional breathability and stretch, so you stay dry and comfortable throughout your hunts. WINDSTOPPER® by Gore-Tex Labs product technology stops heat-sapping gusts in their tracks, while 4-way stretch panels dump heat and allow unrestricted movement. The result is a jacket you can put on in the morning and not have to think about for the rest of the day.

SITKAGEAR.COM



OLLIN MAGNETIC DIGISCOPING



SNAPSHOT SYSTEM™

- MAGNETIC INSTANT CONNECTION
- ATTACH PORTRAIT OR LANDSCAPE
- UNIVERSAL PROTECTION CAP



USE CODE **IWSF20** FOR 20% OFF

OLLIN.CO



BenelliUSA.com

DOMINATE THE MOMENT



LUPO BOLT-ACTION RIFLE

Sub MOA accuracy, advanced ergonomics and recoil-reducing comfort are engineered into this innovative chassis-style rifle. Now, with the addition of the industry-leading BE.S.T. treatment, it is unmatched when it comes to rust, corrosion and abrasions in the field. To find out more, visit [Benelli USA.com](http://BenelliUSA.com).

Benelli

NORTH HELLS CANYON

December 09, 2022

38 captured and collared

By: Rich Carignan



December 19, 2022 was a cold and cloudy day, with winter weather possible as I arrived at Heller Bar, where the Grande Ronde River meets the Snake River. Idaho Department of Fish and Game employees and volunteers of the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation are gathering for a bighorn sheep capture. This capture is part of a statewide “Test and Remove” program to eliminate *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (Movi) from bighorn populations.

After helping load gear and personal belongings into the two IDFG boats, the volunteers headed down to the boat launch to get into our boat. We were greeted by the captains of our boat, Kyson Fletcher, and Dawson Luther of Snake River Adventures. They did a great job piloting the boat up to our pre determined location, the confluence of the Salmon and Snake Rivers.

After arriving, we helped pack a lot of gear uphill to a small flat. We then set up all the equipment needed for the day. As we stood around, Dr. Frances Cassirer (IDFG Senior Research Wildlife Biologist) gave us all a rundown on how the process works. IDFG was going to take blood samples, attach collars, collect nasal swabs and check the overall well-being of the sheep. It wasn't long after that we could hear the distinct sound of the helicopter looking for sheep!

The helicopter crew started slinging sheep to us; they were coming in very quickly, sometimes 3-4 at a time. All of us were busy, either carrying sheep to the weigh scale or helping keep the sheep calm on the tarp. Katey Huggler

(Ph.D. Graduate student from the University of Idaho) worked with one group of volunteers and colleagues to check the percent body fat and pregnancy using a portable ultrasound machine. Frances worked with another group taking blood samples, attaching transmitter collars, taking nasal swabs and ear swabs, and aging the sheep. It was amazing to watch them work with such precision and speed! Mark Vekasy (assistant District Biologist from Washington) and Rick Cooper (retired IDFG Clearwater Region Conservation Officer) were of great help in showing the volunteers how to handle the sheep and take accurate samples.

There were many others representing IDFG that showed their passion for wild sheep; they jumped right in and helped greatly. Kyson and Dawson even jumped in to help, they not only did a great job getting us to the location. They were of tremendous help, thank you Kyson, Dawson, and Snake River Adventures! Don Ebert (Clearwater Region IDFG Commissioner) was busy taking hundreds of great photos, many of which can be seen in our journal and videos. These great photos help put in perspective what the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation is doing in collaboration with the funds raised during our money-raising events. After a long day of working the bighorn sheep, we ended up processing 19 sheep, 10 rams, 7 ewes, and 2 lambs; a great accomplishment. The sheep all seemed to be wintering well, a good sign that the work of so many is paying off!

The boat trip back down the mighty Snake was a great

time to relax, and take in the breathtaking views of Hells Canyon! It was also a time to reflect: without the help of IDFG, the Wild Sheep Foundation, the Midwest Chapter of the WSF, our neighboring states, and our dedicated IDWSF members none of these conservation efforts are possible. It's people with a passion for bighorn sheep that are collectively working to 'Put and Keep Wild Sheep on the Mountain' and, the future is looking bright for bighorn sheep in Hells Canyon!



JOURNEY INTO THE ALASKAN WILDERNESS



BEAR HUNTING

MOOSE HUNTING

CARIBOU HUNTING

SHEEP HUNTING

GOAT HUNTING

Hunting Guides for Brown and Grizzly Bear as well as hunts for Dall Sheep, Caribou, Moose, and Goat.

Frank Danford (Registered Guide)

D & L Outfitters

P.O. Box 241183

Anchorage, Alaska 99524

907-230-0176

frankdanford@gci.net

www.alaska-d-l-outfitters.com

D&L Outfitters

Since 1976



DEAD. ON. ACCURATE.

UNLOCK ALL-RANGE PRECISION & POWER

Take your hunts and handloads farther. The sleek **Speer® Impact** component bullet uses the patented Slipstream™ polymer tip to expand at velocities 200 fps lower than comparable designs for extreme-range terminal performance. Its tough, molecularly bonded construction delivers deep penetration at any distance.

Now available in 140-grain 6.5mm, and 172- and 190-grain .308.

Hollow-Core Slipstream Tip for Extreme Long Range Expansion



BUY DIRECT AT SPEER.COM



EST. **B** 1902

BUCK®

KNIVES

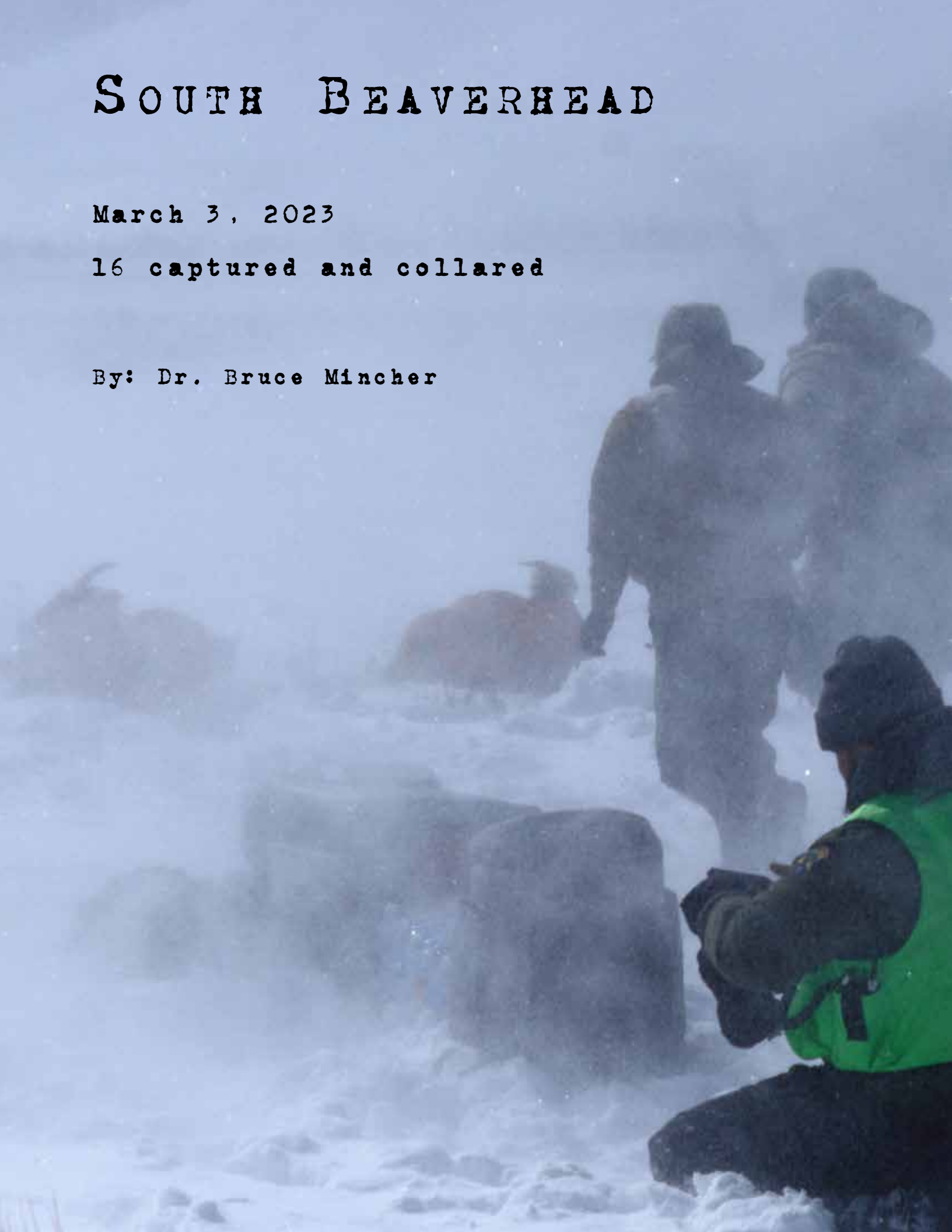
BUCKKNIVES.COM

SOUTH BEAVERHEAD

March 3, 2023

16 captured and collared

By: Dr. Bruce Mincher



Straddling the Idaho-Montana border, the South Beaverheads are nestled at the beginning of that shoulder of Idaho that twists and turns eventually all the way to our northern panhandle. Those twists and turns give our state the iconic silhouette that Idahoans love. At only 60 miles or so from Idaho Falls as the raven flies, the South Beaverheads are still wild and lonely despite their proximity to the big city. Rising to the east of the Birch Creek valley, they are home to pronghorn, mule deer, elk and ancient pictographs, and also a small herd of bighorn sheep. Anyone driving the commute between Mud Lake and Leadore on Highway 28 has probably seen them. But as visible as they sometimes are, not enough is known about this small band to ensure they persist.

Wild sheep were essentially eliminated from the South Beaverheads during settlement times. The usual causes, unregulated harvest and disease being mainly responsible. The area was widely grazed by domestic sheep in years past, but far less so today. Restoration work including habitat improvement and translocations began in the late 1970s, and 60-80 sheep were counted by the mid-1980s, but the current population is thought to number only about 25-30. With numbers this low, there is currently no hunting in this Population Management Unit. However, the low numbers are based on incidental observations during aerial surveys for deer and elk, and a thorough count has not been conducted in recent times. But now, Idaho Fish and Game's new statewide action plan for wild sheep management has already begun to address this lack of data for the wild sheep of the South Beaverheads.

Friday, March 3rd, 2023 was still winter in eastern Idaho. Temperatures were in the teens and it was breezy; a fine day to catch wild sheep. As we gathered in the pre-dawn hours at the IDF&G Region 6 office in Idaho Falls, I reflected on our originally scheduled capture date back in December. That day had been in the teens too, but on the other side of zero, and foggy. So foggy, in fact that the helicopter couldn't fly and we had postponed. I wondered if the wind would shut us down on this our second try, but at first light we were on our way, the caravan heading north on I-15, then west at Sage Junction, on to Mud Lake and then north past Reno Point and finally to the capture site a bit south of Skull Canyon. The morning sun didn't bring any warmth. Gusty breezes occasionally enveloped us in a brief ground blizzard. But the sky was blue and the view across the Birch Creek valley toward frigid Diamond Peak and Bell Mountain in the Lemhis was spectacular. It was a view that embodied wild Idaho.



Persevering, we trudged through knee-deep snow against a stiff breeze to spread out tarps on which to work up the sheep. They had to be held down along their perimeters with coolers and miscellaneous gear to keep them from becoming airborne. We erected an aluminum tripod with its scale for weighing our captives, and sorted through cardboard boxes full of previously prepared collars; each corresponding to a sample bag containing uniquely coded data cards, nasal swabs and DNA punches. With so little work having been done here in recent years, we hoped to get as much information as possible out of every living sample. The swabs were for Movi sampling. The collars would help determine seasonal travel patterns and relocate animals that test positive, if it became necessary to remove them from the population. With luck we would capture much of the remaining population that day. The test and remove technique was experimental only a few years ago but has been found to be successful at producing Movi-free, increasing populations elsewhere. If Movi is found in the South Beaverheads based on the samples collected that day, test and remove techniques could restore this herd too. Habitat modeling suggests that more than a thousand wild sheep could be at home here. Imagine a herd of 1000 wild sheep. Things were once that way.

The helicopter began bringing them in almost before we were ready and soon we were working up as many as four sheep at a time. One doesn't notice the cold when three sheep come in at a time, although it was nice to get my gloves back on after the latest collar was finished. The release occurred a couple of dozen yards above the work site. It's nice to have a few young volunteers around when it becomes time to bear a stretcher through deep snow up to the release site. By days end we had 16 collars, all apparently healthy and unharmed, as evidenced by the way they quickly disappeared into the rocks above, once their blindfold was off. It's possible we collared half the total population and that's a pretty representative sample.

Idaho's Bighorn Sheep Action Plan is successfully underway and monitoring wild sheep statewide from the alpine heights of eastern Idaho to the desert canyons of the southwest. This is thanks to the dedicated biologists of Idaho Fish and Game, a Fish and Game Commission that supports the action plan, Idaho Wild Sheep foundation funding and volunteers, and a generous Grant in Aid from the Wild Sheep Foundation. The South Beaverheads are on the back burner no longer.



BREAK THE WEATHER

THE ALL-NEW UNCOMPAGRE FOUNDRY JACKET

It's a rain shell, an insulated puffy and a brush jacket all in one. Simplify your kit with our new Uncompagre Foundry Jacket. Available for both women and men, this piece brings weatherproof durability for the nastiest days on the mountain in a single jacket.

Learn more at www.firstlite.com/breaktheweather

facebook.com/firstlite youtube.com/FirstLiteHuntingApparel @firstlitehunting /firstlite.com





AGC
ALASKA GUIDE
CREATIONS
19 71

MADE IN THE
USA

alaskaguidecreations.com
Binocular Harnesses, Backpacks, Holsters,
Rangefinder Pouches, In-Line Accessory Adapters,
Game Bags, Hats, Apparel, and more.....



MYSTERY RANCH

THE LAST HUNTING PACK YOU WILL EVER NEED.

Built on the Guide Light MT frame, MYSTERY RANCH hunting packs allow you to push the limits of what's humanly possible on any pack-out.

explore more at:
mysteryranch.com



ULTRA-PRECISION RIFLE PACKAGES

**PATENTED DESIGNS & ENGINEERING
MANUFACTURED IN BOISE, IDAHO**



RIVER ADVENTURES

WWW.HELLSCANYON.TOURS



AllTerraArms.com
208-203-1227

OWYHEE FRONT

December 15, 2022

12 captured and collared

By: Bill London

The temperature was in the single digits as my brother Mark and I drove into Oreana, Idaho. I told him that we were meeting the Idaho Fish & Game biologists and the other Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation volunteers at the old Catholic church. The stone church, built in 1883, was easy to spot, and Mark mentioned that he didn't see any other people. "They'll be in the back on the east side – where the sun is," and they were. A small group sipping coffee and getting to know each other. This was the Castle Creek team. Further north the Reynolds Creek team was also meeting. Jim Pope and his crew of muggers from Leading Edge Aviation would be flying the capture helicopter and working both sites.

IDFG Biologist Hollie Miyasaki finished the safety briefing and we loaded into 4x4 trucks (with good ground clearance) and headed for Castle Creek. To the north biologist Chel Curtis and her team of ID WSF volunteers and Bureau of Land Management folks were doing the same.

The Owyhee Front bighorn sheep population is made up of several sub-herds, Reynolds Cr, Castle Cr, Rough Mountain, Little Jacks and Big Jacks Cr. Are these herds healthy? The Bruneau/Jarbidge canyons to the east had a Movi die off in 2017 as did Oregon's Lower Owyhee herd just over the border to the west in 2016. Do they intermix? There was no recent movement or health information on these herds.

Reynolds and Castle Cr have small sustaining herds that are not showing growth although there is available habitat. Rough mtn sheep might be moving between there and Little Jacks, it's not known. Little and Big Jacks Cr used to have many more bighorn sheep. Lion predation and disease are to be investigated. Hunters have reported seeing quite a few lions in the canyons and lions have been documented as a primary mortality factor of other big game in the area. Ground surveys have not found the coughing and head shaking of Movi infected sheep, the blood tests from this capture will help tell if it's in these herds.

Everyone fell into the work of setting up the processing site. Tarps were laid out and secured with rocks to prevent rotor wash from sending them into the air and into chopper rotors. The scale tripod was erected, and collar kits organized. Then we waited.

Jim was flying the Reynolds Cr area first, so Chel and her team were busy working up sheep that were flown into them. They took blood samples, DNA samples, weights, and fitted the sheep with collars that had both GPS and VHS capabilities. At Castle Cr we waited.

The overcast sky was preventing sunlight from warming us. We stood around and the cold was settling into our bones.

Volunteer Ty Miller set his propane heater on the ground, naturally everyone circled around it like a campfire. Hunting stories were told, perhaps an embellishment or two. And we waited.

Then like Radar O'Reilly in M.A.S.H. someone heard the chopper! Jim piloted his chopper over us for a flyover and headed out to find bighorn sheep. A fixed wing airplane was working as a spotter for Jim. We watched with anticipation as they flew through the canyons. Then they flew across the mountain sides. And we waited.

Jim landed and as he walked towards us the muggers were warming their hands by standing near the helicopter exhaust. Jim and Hollie went into a huddle – not a good sign. The bighorn sheep weren't showing themselves. The overcast had created flat light and no shadows to help spot animals. Furthermore, the ground was a mottled pattern of white snow and brown dirt, so a stationary animal didn't catch a person's eye. Sheep that have been captured before tend to move and to be easily seen. These sheep didn't know what a helicopter was. Wildlife Tech Justin Bright offered where he had seen sheep while scouting the processing site. Volunteer Trent DeYoung said where he had seen sheep while coyote hunting the area. Jim and his crew took off to explore the described areas. And we waited.

Helicopters are expensive whether they're capturing critters or not and Hollie had a week of captures scheduled across the state. Like in fishing, getting skunked happens, but it hurts. Hollie was discussing options with her team, maybe collar sheep on Rough Mountain or start on Little Jacks a day early. The mood of the volunteers stayed positive. Bighorn hunters understand that sheep can be notoriously hard to find. They hide in caves and little rocky chutes, or under juniper trees.

Jim returned frustrated, no sheep. Hollie was handling the pressure; where to use the chopper crew, what can be rescheduled, how much daylight is left for the chopper to fly, when will the chopper ferry to the next capture site, how will it affect the other planned captures, how much more will it cost, will the sample size be big enough? She and Jim went over maps, and it was decided the chopper crew would go to Rough Mountain and any sheep captured would be processed on the hill. It was the right decision and our volunteers, while disappointed, accepted it. Sometimes you get skunked.

As we started to gather gear, like an angler taking her last cast of the day Hollie's radio crackled, "Sheep! We found them."

Soon the chopper climbs out of the canyon with two sheep slung below her. Everyone gets to work as these sheep are set down. Then Jim is back with two more sheep! It's all-hands-on-deck now. I was holding a ewe, helping fit a collar when I heard the chopper return again – two more sheep! Six sheep are on the tarp. It's a bit too much for this small crew. Everyone is working on a sheep, fitting collars, taking blood samples, passing tools back and forth, writing down data, when I realize that the muggers are on the tarp helping out. Then I see Chel, the Reynolds Creek team had arrived too.

When the last of the sheep was released, Hollie was smiling. Smiling like a kid who just caught a big fish.



IRON MOUNTAIN SKULL HANGERS



Custom made in Idaho
Available @ initialascent.com

Jim Naccarato 208.965.0859
Ironmountainskullhangers@gmail.com

ADAMSADAPTERS



KOWA TSN
66 MM

BIG EYES

www.adamsadapters.com
502-907-1077



GEAR FOR LIFE



KIFARU
DALL



RIVERTON, WYOMING

WWW.KIFARU.NET

© 2023 JOE GRIFFIN | MAX BENZ | KIFARU



KILLGORE ADVENTURES

Idaho's #1 Adventure Company

Take your entire family on a river adventure they will never forget!



Hells Canyon's #1 Jet Boat Tour



Come do Idaho the right way.

- Jet Boat Tours- RZR Rentals
- Adventure Fishing



Let's Book Your Adventure!

Call us at (800) 469-8757
www.killgoreadventures.com



GRAYL



SPARTAN PRECISION EQUIPMENT

LOWER SALMON

March 7-8, 2023

16 captured and collared

By: Don Colter

I have been able to participate in various volunteer activities with the Idaho Fish and Game Department over the years, Hunters Education Instructor, deer drive nets in the Boise foothills, and California Bighorn lamb surveys in the Owyhees. Working as a volunteer has allowed me to give back, help the sport of hunting and assist in the conservation of the animals I love. Along the way I have gotten to collaborate with many great people, both volunteers and members of the Idaho Fish and Game Department.

Anytime a person gets to be around bighorn sheep is a momentous day. However, when you have a couple beautiful days along the lower Salmon River in March, it can be amazing. I was fortunate enough to take part in an amazing experience that will help contribute to the success of the bighorn sheep herd along the Salmon River and conservation of bighorn sheep in Idaho.

A cool crisp March morning greeted the Volunteers for the capture which included Don Colter, Bill London, Josh DeLong and Mike Schlegel from the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation and Don Ebert, Idaho Fish and Game Commissioner from the Clearwater region. The IDFG team lead the way and an adventure began.

Just out of Riggins we boarded two jet boats to transport IDFG biologists and staff along with the volunteers for a quick trip up the lower Salmon River. A suitable beach area was found for processing the captured sheep, the boats were parked, and the gear carried to the processing site. The site was small, so the chopper would be coming close as the sheep were lowered to the ground. As the equipment was set up, everything had to be well secured to prevent being blown by the prop wash. Once the area was readied a safety briefing was held and the volunteers were assigned tasks. I volunteered to be the scribe, which collects



critical data from the process and writes it down on a data form that is used by the biologists. The data included body temperature, weight, age, sex, presence of scabies, pregnancy, GPS collar number, blood collection, nose swabs, and any other characteristics of the sheep.

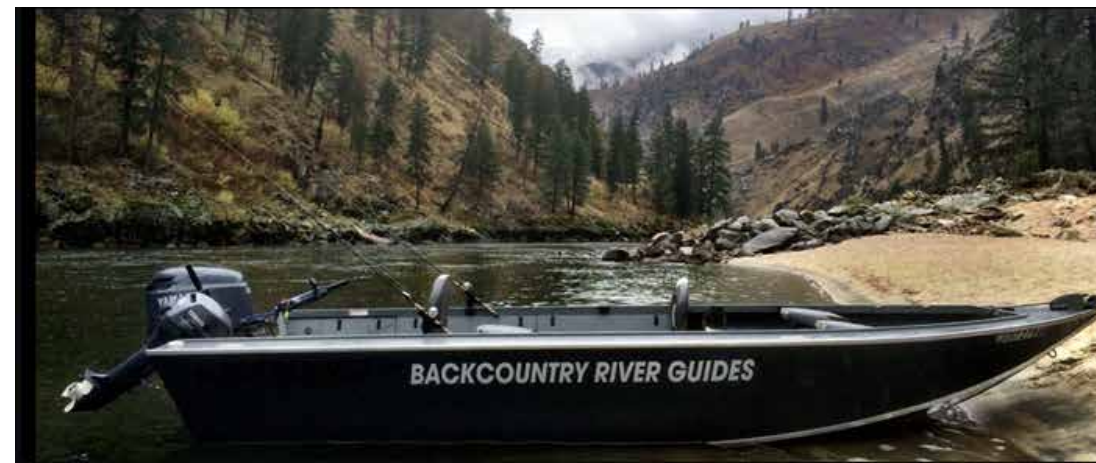
As we waited, we could see the fixed wing scout plane checking the slopes and ridges of the rugged mountains above the river. Along with the plane the distinctive sight and sound of the chopper was ever present. Excited we waited until the first load of three ewes were seen. The chopper lowered the sheep to the ground in an amazingly gentle way. Once the chopper rose away from the ewes everyone scurried towards the sheep. Each team carefully placed the hobbled and blindfolded ewe on a stretcher and went to the scale tripod. Weight recorded; the ewe was taken to the tarped working area. Once there, temperatures were immediately taken to make sure the animal was not overheated from the experience. Like a race car pit crew, the biologists quickly took blood and nasal swabs, attached the GPS collar, tagged the ear, evaluated for pregnancy, scored body condition, examined for scabies, and assessed overall health. In a matter of minutes, each animal was processed and released.

The second day started early again, but slightly farther up the river. Everyone was at ease as the teams patiently waited for the familiar sound of the chopper. Jim Pope the chopper pilot from Leading Edge Aviation and his team were amazing. True professionals and incredibly experienced with wildlife capture. It is hard to explain how artfully Jim flew his chopper in such rugged country and captured the sheep. During the breaks, the muggers were glad to share stories of what they do and how it is done. During one

break one of the muggers showed the volunteers how to pack the net cannister and the slings, both having a careful system and must be done correctly.

In between loads of sheep, all the IDFG team were great fun to visit with and exchange stories. I particularly enjoyed talking with IDFG Biologists Hollie Miyasaki and Dr. Frances Cassirer. The depth of knowledge Hollie and Frances have about wild sheep is amazing. What is better is their interest in sharing what they have learned over the years. I learned about various herds of sheep in Idaho, travel patterns, prevalence of diseases (particularly Movi), habitat and ecology. One thing that I found particularly fascinating were DNA studies that had been done using a collection of sheep skulls that dated back over one hundred years. The study showed that certain herds had lost genomes, while other herds were relatively intact from a historical and genome perspective.

The end of the second and last day on the Lower Salmon River came late in the day. Jim Pope and his crew had enormous success in capturing sheep. The last load of sheep soon arrived that contributed to a two-day total of thirty-five sheep. What an amazing sight, six ewes hanging from the chopper. The teams furiously processed the sheep and bid them good luck and prosperity. Next came breaking down the site and hauling the gear back to the boats for the ride down the river. What an experience to be part of the sheep capture. It is one thing to see bighorn sheep in the distance, it is quite an experience to actually put your hands on a wild sheep and be part of the conservation process for such a magnificent animal. A memory that will last a lifetime.



www.backcountryriverguides.com



**BACKCOUNTRY
RIVER
GUIDES**

*Guided steelhead fishing
in the most remote water
in the lower 48!*

208-315-7201



MASTER GUIDE COKE WALLACE

907.683.4868 HEALY, ALASKA WWW.MIDNIGHTSUNSAFARIS.COM

Dall Sheep • Grizzly • Caribou • Moose • Predator





JIM SAGE

December 17, 2022

15 captured and collared



BRUSH COUNTRY Studios
 TWO COMPANIES ONE GOAL
 PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN Wildlife Studios
 DESIGNING & BUILDING WORLD CLASS TRIMPH ROOMS

WWW.BRUSHCOUNTRYSTUDIOS.COM | WWW.PRAIRIEMOUNTAINWILDLIFE.COM
 16526 CYPRESS ROSEHILL RD, CYPRESS TX 77429 | 1.281.256.0742 | OFFICE@BRUSHCOUNTRYSTUDIOS.COM

JIM SAGE MOUNTAINS

BY: COLTEN GILBERT



I grew up near the small farming and ranching town of Malta, Idaho, which sits in the Raft River Valley. Surrounding the valley are six different mountain ranges, each unique in their own way. As a youth, I spent time on every one of them, hunting and fishing, every chance I had. If asked if I had a favorite mountain when I was younger, I might have answered differently but now there is no doubt where I enjoy spending most of my free time.

Jim Sage mountain is a small but rugged mountain range that spans north to south roughly 16 miles and only climbs to 8,000 feet at its highest point. On that mountain and the adjacent Raft River mountains live around 100-120 California bighorn sheep, depending on time of year. California bighorn sheep tend to have smaller bodies and horns than their cousins the Rocky Mountain bighorn. Historically, there were bighorn sheep that lived near Jim Sage, however, for nearly a century the species had been extirpated. In 2000 the first translocation of 30 California Bighorn sheep sourced from Oregon was completed by Idaho Fish and Game, as well as another the following year. From 2000-2004 there were 93 California bighorns released on the Jim sage and Albion mountains. Ultimately, the Albion Mountain translocations failed, and Jim Sage was a success. Seven years after the first translocation, sheep density was to a point where the first two sheep tags were offered. The unit has had at least one sheep tag ever since, usually two.

Fast forward to the year 2020, I had not drawn a big game hunting tag in my 16 years of applying in Idaho. Not a deer,

elk, or pronghorn. Not one... Since the time I was old enough, I had hunted in the general units with my rifle and then later a bow to gain another avenue to be able to hunt different units in Idaho. A coworker, who had taken an impressive rocky mountain bighorn in central Idaho, inspired me to apply for bighorn sheep. I decided to start applying for one of two California bighorn sheep tags right here in my own backyard. Many of you reading this have been applying for bighorn sheep for years. I am “that guy” you sometimes hear or read about. I lucked into a tag of a lifetime on my first application. To add to that, my wife drew an Idaho moose tag that same year, but that story will have to wait for another day. I suddenly had a full plate for summer scouting and a hunting season that will not be forgotten.

The evening I received an email from Idaho Fish and Game that notified me that I had successfully drawn the tag, I drove to the area attempting to locate the rams. My excitement of drawing was slightly dampened as I didn't spot anything but a few beef cows. Though it is a small area it took me weeks to locate any sheep at all. My first glassing point was about 45 minutes from home, so I was able to spend an impressive amount of time looking over the steep faces of the mountain. Still, I could not repeatedly turn up rams. Time wasn't the issue. It was a new species for me, and I just had to admit I needed help. That's when I contacted Ken Jafek.

I had known of Ken while growing up, mostly by his almost legendary guide business “War Eagle Outfitters” that is still operated by his sons today. When I called Ken, he suggested

I talk with one of his sons, well known as “Toad”. I spent a lot of time talking with Toad and he taught me a lot about the rams, their habits and the mountain. I spent a lot of time with Ken and sometimes Toad throughout the summer. Little did anyone know that it was Ken's last summer on this earth. It was extremely fortunate I was able to spend more time with him than most that summer, something I'll remember forever. We went on many glassing trips, where I was able to listen to many of Ken's incredible stories. His tales of past treed lions, a treed jaguar in Mexico, mountain goat, deer, and sheep hunts would sometimes force me out of the spotting scope. I enjoyed listening to his stories for hours as we glassed. Wouldn't you know it, when you go glassing with experts, you are going to find the rams. I was very appreciative of their help though I knew that I would not have them on my hunt. They would be guiding a sheep hunter in a different unit which you can read about in the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation journal, winter issue of 2020.

Opening morning was upon me and I was sitting at the very top of a wind-blown and jagged ridge trying to relocate the rams I had seen just two days prior. The band of 8 rams had given me the slip just when I thought I had them pinned down for opening day. I had plenty of help opening morning with my dad, two of my brothers Andrew and Jesse, and Andrew's son Rhys. All of them were behind spotting scopes near the bottom of the mountain roughly 4 miles away. I had occasional contact with my youngest brother, Jesse, through text message. I asked if he had spotted the rams. He replied, “No, just a doe.” Then just 3 minutes later “I found four.” I somewhat ignored it thinking he meant he found four does, and I was actually a little bugged he even felt the need to tell me that. However, I had to ask. “Four does, or what?” He replied “Sheep, now 6.” I frantically attempted to call him and through scratchy

reception understood they were straight below me, maybe a mile. (Later, after the hunt, he admitted to being somewhat rattled after spotting the sheep and was struggling to keep track of them as he was glassing into the sun.) I quickly started moving down the hill closer toward where Jesse had told me he spotted the sheep, all the while hiking through shale rock, making as little noise as shale affords you. When I finally peaked over the cliffy ridge, I could see a total of eight rams 600 yards away. They were slowly feeding uphill right towards me, then randomly bedded down. I started picking them apart through my spotting scope, trying to find the mature ram that I had been watching throughout the summer. It didn't take long, and my ram stepped out on the edge of a cliff right in the sunlight to put on a show.

It was a windy morning, and I knew I had time to close the distance. I looked downhill and picked an ancient cedar tree that I would hope to take my shot from. I quickly backed out and started down a cut in the mountain that would keep me out of sight and have the wind in my favor. I cruised downhill and crawled underneath the big cedar tree I had planned to get to. I ranged my ram at 274 yards. What I would consider a very shootable distance. The wind was gusting, but I felt confident. I put a round in the chamber of my rifle, put the crosshairs on my ram, and slowly squeezed the trigger... I MISSED! I couldn't believe it! What is more unbelievable is that in the following seconds I somehow didn't panic. The rams all banded together in a group, wildly looking for where all the noise had come from. Then, as if I had him on a string, my ram was pulled to the left of the group and offered me another clear shot. This time I made it count. After being hit, the ram took one step forward and did a somersault off the 15-foot ledge he was standing on, landing on his back. I had killed my first ram.





I made my way down to my ram through the shale and lava cliffs as my family started making their way up to me on ATV's. I had no way of contacting anybody because I had lost cell reception. I just sat there by myself taking it all in. I thought of the time I had put in throughout the summer and all of those that had helped me along the way, some that I haven't mentioned here. I couldn't be more grateful for them all. We took a few pictures, broke the ram down, and packed out a short distance by sheep hunting standards. As we were hiking to the ATV's I said to myself out loud, "This will not be my last day of sheep hunting."



Since that incredible day, I have spent a lot of time on Jim Sage, as well as a few more sheep mountains. In mid-December of 2022 I was one of many volunteers able to represent the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation while assisting the Idaho Fish and Game. We accomplished the capture, testing, and collaring of ten Jim Sage rams along with five ewes. It was incredible to see the same rams that started my passion for sheep, up close and personal. There is nothing like handling a live bighorn sheep. It was rewarding to see that the funds of so many generous members and donors are fulfilling our purpose as a foundation. "To Put and Keep Wild Sheep on the Mountain".



LAMBSON'S WILDLIFE ART



ART BY AWARD-WINNING ARTISTS, FATHER AND SON:
HAYDEN AND DALLEN LAMBSON



Originals and prints (both paper and canvas) available for most images. See websites for details. Commissions are accepted.

EASTMANS

36 YEARS
Of Hunting MEDIA

READ-
Print/digital Journals, Blogs, Books

WATCH-
Hunting TV, Beyond The Grid, YouTube

LISTEN-
Podcasts- 6 different shows



Scan ME!

www.EASTMANS.com



www.sandsarchery.com

EXPERT ADVICE FROM REAL HUNTERS

HUNTING OPTICS



BACKPACKING GEAR



PREMIUM ARCHERY GEAR



S&S ARCHERY
2796 S VICTORY VIEW WAY
BOISE, ID 83709

CALL OR TEXT (208) 495-4222
ROB@SANDSARCHERY.COM



At S&S Archery we pride ourselves on selling only gear that we use and personally like. Chances are if you have a question about a product we can give you a real world answer to its performance with no BS.

CUSTOMER SERVICE . ADVICE . FREE SHIPPING .

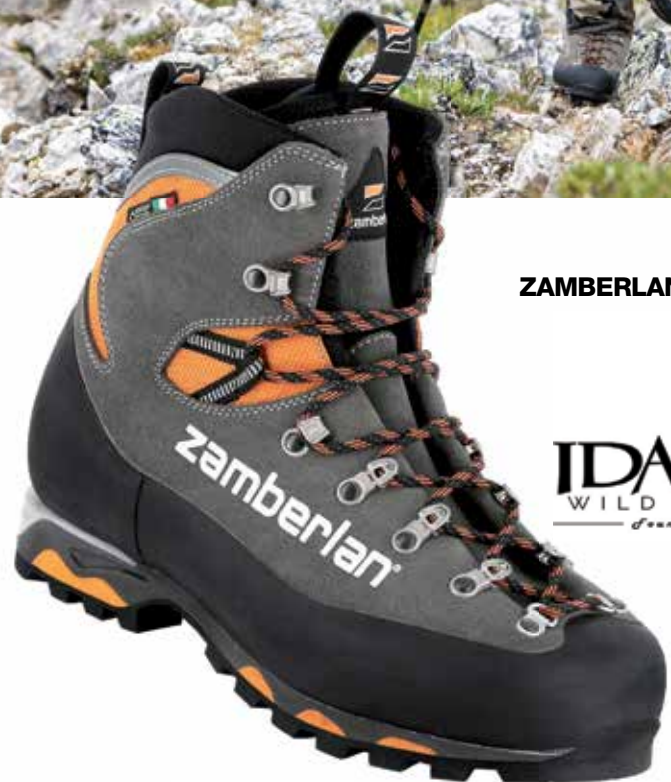


WELDING AND REPAIR





BUILT FOR THE WHOLE JOURNEY



2092 MOUNTAIN TREK GTX RR

An advanced, technical mountain boot, the Mountain Trek's fit and performance combine with a truly hikable midsole to create the foremost sheep hunting boot available in the world today. With three generations of family-owned boot-making expertise, Zamberlan delivers quality Italian craftsmanship, relentless innovation, and unfailing durability for the Western hunter.



ZAMBERLANUSA.COM

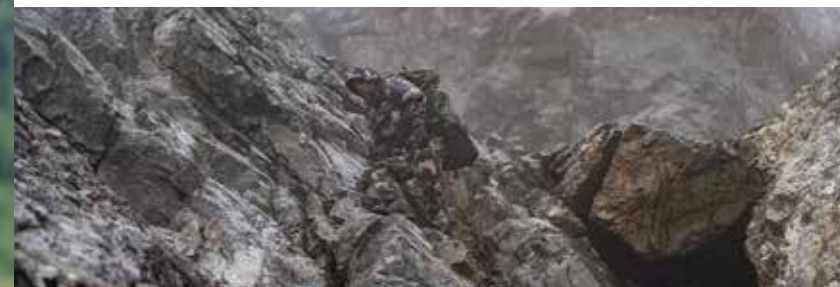
Photo: Greg McHale's Wild Yukon

ZAMBERLAN PROUDLY SUPPORTS



INNOVATION NEVER RESTS –
Setting the standard for ultralight hunting gear for over a decade. KUIIU offers an extensive line of apparel and gear for all your hunting needs.

Only at
KUIIU.COM



RUNNING DOWN SEABISCUIT



BY: CLAY HILL

Most hunters know that a hunt begins in the spring during application season. Having points built up somewhere in the middle of the pack, my expectation of drawing this coveted sheep tag was small. I knew the odds of drawing a highly sought-after rifle tag in some of the better units throughout the state of Colorado were slim. I decided to apply for an archery tag that aligned with my schedule as a guide and outfitter, in a unit located within an hour of my hunting lodge.

Soon the hunt draw emails came. I noticed that goat and sheep applications were drawn, and my results were posted. Like everyone who opens these emails, I was prepared to be let down by the UNSUCCESSFUL message posted at the top. I opened my goat application first, and as expected, the draw was UNSUCCESSFUL. Just as I was telling my buddy how awesome it would be to draw the archery sheep tag, I applied for, I opened the email with the sheep draw results. I started reading the words and was completely awe-struck to find I had drawn the sheep tag. I swear I read that damn email 5x but still could not believe it. I was on cloud nine and the planning began.

Summer arrived, my wife and boys joined me on a couple weekends of scouting, where the first weekend we saw well over 75 ewes, and 0 rams. Wow, here I am thinking I am an experienced guide and I can't even find a ram. The next weekend, we ran into one of the rifle hunters, and her husband. They had spotted a huge group of rams the day before and shared some information on the patterns of the sheep. Feeling somewhat reassured that there were at least rams seen in the area, we went home hoping that we'd find some on the next trip.

We are now within a month of the hunt; I began reaching out to some of the past hunters aiming to gather information and advice for my hunt. Connor Clark, from Traders Rendezvous in Gunnison Colorado, had drawn the tag two years before. Connor gave me some great advice, saying that it was the hardest hunt he had ever done. His best advice, "with persistence it will happen." Knowing that Connor was a hardcore hunter that grew up in the area, I was beginning to understand that this hunt was going to be harder than I had expected.

The next scouting trip led me to another hunter that shared pictures of the biggest ram in the unit. He was an incredible ram, everything I could hope to see, let alone hunt; Old, heavy, and smart. Connor shared stories of hunting this ram the year before with his buddy, sharing that he would just disappear once getting bumped. I now had a vision of killing this ram, so the quest to get eyes on him began.

The weekend before the hunt began my friend, Trey Milhoun, and I went scouting together. We found a beautiful ram, that we nicknamed "Pretty Boy", a high 160's ram that had a great look. Things were starting to look positive for opening day. Rams were starting to show up, some good ones that anyone would be happy to tag out on, but I still had my mind set on the ram in the picture.

Opening day arrived and we were in search of the ram in the picture, whom we nicknamed "Seabiscuit". We spotted numerous good rams. Some friends that were helping me thought they spotted "Seabiscuit", so we worked to get around where they had seen him go over a ridge, but never found him that day.

The following day, I searched in the same area hoping to see "Seabiscuit", but instead stumbled upon "Pretty Boy" in a group working his way down to the river to get a drink. We cut them off and got about 90 yards away, ready to get drawn and take a shot. Unfortunately, the group of rams busted us and ran back up in the rocks. This was now going to be a scenario we saw

I was now in full feel sorry
for myself mode. I missed,
I cried, I got frustrated,
I lowered my standards,
I all but gave up.

In the end, I found these are
emotions that most sheep
hunters go through and
that's why it's so thrilling
to hunt them.

unravel every day for 24 days.

On day 24 of my hunt, I'm on my 28th stalk and my mind and body are shot. The morning started out with yet another stalk on "Pretty Boy" who happened to be lying with a group of 10 other rams. By the time I got up around the canyon and worked my way back down above them they had separated a little, so I wasn't sure where exactly "Pretty Boy" was. I peeked over the top of a cliff and spotted a ram lying about 15 yards below me. It looked like one of the smaller rams that I had spotted lying beside the 3rd largest ram we had seen all month; we called him #3. I had lowered my standards and was now perfectly fine with killing #3. After waiting for three

hours for the rams to get up, they moved the only way that I had no shot due to thick trees between us. As they worked under me, I stood up and moved to my right to catch a glimpse of them but couldn't see them, because they were literally 10 feet straight below me. Finally, I heard one of them jump up on some rocks about 10 yards from me, the small ram spotted me. All three rams started to run away, but #3 stopped for a quick shot. I didn't have time to range him and I missed. I was now in full feel sorry for myself mode. I

missed, I cried, I got frustrated, I lowered my standards, I all but gave up. In the end, I found these are emotions that most sheep hunters go through and that's why it's so thrilling to hunt them.

We grabbed some lunch down by the river and made a game plan for the afternoon hunt. I just felt like going home and giving up for the day, but my friends Mike McLean and Sladen Hendrickson wouldn't let that happen. They were going to go look way down the canyon in an area where we hadn't spent

much time in the last week. They went their way, and I went up where "Seabiscuit" had been seen by another hunter on the first day.

I was sitting there praying that I'd have one chance to see "Seabiscuit". While glassing I heard some chatter on the radio from Mike and Sladen. It was very broken, but I thought I heard them say "Seabiscuit". The last 24 days, we all had seen good rams and with excitement thought it was "Seabiscuit", so I truly wasn't too optimistic it was him. Regardless, I drove up on a ridge to call them back and Mike was yelling on the radio, "Dude, get you're a** down here we've found "Seabiscuit" bedded by himself, it's 100% him." Now my heart starts racing,



and I am driving like Travis Pastrana in a rally car working my way to them. I pulled up beside them and looked through their spotter. Lying there like a king was "Seabiscuit", without question a step above all the other rams we've been hunting. This was the first time we had found a ram bedded alone to stalk. Looking at my watch and overwhelmed with excitement I realize I only had 1.5 hours of daylight left. We made a game plan, and I left the guys. I grabbed the essentials; bow, arrows, release and started working my way to him. Those

who have spotted an animal from afar and worked up to them know how much the look of the land changes when you get close. When I left, he was behind a lone cedar, and appeared to be sky-lined, but once I got in close there were multiple cedars, and no sky-lined sheep. Knowing time was ticking I peeked out behind a cedar to range some rocks where I thought he might be. Dumb mistake! "Seabiscuit" was lying behind a rock not 50 yards from me and pegged me. He jumped up and began to run away, not slowing down. My heart was crushed, I got impatient and blew him out.

"with persistence it will happen."

Mike sped down the road, and I ran down to him and jumped in the truck. We got on the main road and caught a glimpse of him paralleling the road about 900 yards away not slowing down at all. At this point, we had about 35 minutes of daylight and a giant ram running with no stop in sight. We quickly decided to get ahead of him, and I would jump out and try to run up a random canyon in hopes of cutting him off. This never works out with a gun let alone with a bow and arrow, but what the hell, let's give it a try. I grab my bow, release and quiver and start running up the canyon, I get about 1000 yards up and it opens to where there are no more trees, just sage brush. I sit down behind a cedar just to get my breath and examine the area around me. I have one cedar that ranges 30 yards in front of me, otherwise it's all wide open out to 500 yards. No longer than I ranged the cedar in front of me, I look up to my left at about 500 yards and like a dream "Seabiscuit" is running straight at me. I am completely unprepared to shoot, and my nerves are now jumping out of my body. I get an arrow out of my quiver with the shallow cover of the sage, get my release on my bow and doubt my success in this situation. The only thing I could do is pray he'd go behind the cedar 30 yards from me, otherwise I would never have the cover I needed to draw. All the missed shots, blown stalks, long hikes, and continuous let downs built up to this moment and I knew this was my moment to make it happen.

"Seabiscuit" is trotting straight to me, and at the last moment slows to a walk and goes directly where I had hoped, behind the cedar at 30 yards. I quickly drew as he stepped out, he saw me and quartered hard to me. Knowing this was my only shot, I released my arrow. It drove into him right behind the front shoulder back into center mass. I dropped my bow and began to lose my composure, the build up to this moment had made me a mess. I watched him turn around and run over the ridge he had just ran from. I grabbed my bow and began to run after him. As I got up on the ridge I found spots of blood, so I slowly walked following the trail, eyes glued to the ground. About 50 yards over the ridge, I look up and he is standing there hunched up. I quickly grab another arrow and send it downrange to him, shooting just over his back. My mind is screaming to settle down and relax. I watched him run down in this deep ravine and as he tries climbing to the other side he flips over backward. Kicking with his feet straight up, I again take off running directly to him. Once within 20 yards I knocked another arrow and sent it through both lungs. "Seabiscuit" was dead, and the hunt was finally over.

Hindsight, I know I did everything you're not supposed to



do with a wounded animal. Like running after him at last light, and not giving him time to expire. I was on a high that only people who have been in the same circumstance know and my body was at will to my adrenaline. 24 days, my 29th stalk, my 7th arrow and I'm standing over the number one target ram in the unit. My chest felt like it was going to explode with excitement, and tears were running down my face from exhaustion. Throughout the entire hunt I had so many friends that were willing to help but found myself alone when I killed. With no one beside me to take this moment in, I started calling all the people who had been a part of the hunt. My dad being the first call because I knew how excited he would be.

This sheep hunt proved what good friends were. I had friends from all over the country come to help me on the hunt, whether they stood by my side physically in the field, or by the phone at night to give me encouragement to keep working for it. Words can't express my gratitude for the people who helped me make this dream come true. All involved made my world and fulfilled a feeling inside me that I never knew existed. The highs and lows of this hunt shook me to my core. Only through motivation from those with me was I able to keep pushing. It was because of all who helped that I was able to take "Seabiscuit", making him just as much their ram as he is mine. I hope to pay it forward on one of their special hunts soon. Thanks to Mike McLean, Lorenzo Sartini, Chiam Loyd, Trey Milhoun, Sladen Hendrickson, Brandy Williams, Connor Clark, Cody McLean, Shawn Lechman, Mike Duplan, Jeff Menagatti, Steve, Trevor and Brad Phelps. A special thanks to my beautiful wife, Hunter Hill, and my boys Creed and

Cannyn, for being so supportive on this hunt. Seabiscuit taped out around 175" with 16" bases, truly blessed to have taken such a magnificent animal.



Apex Next Evolution is proud to support the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation and its members in their conservation efforts. As a brand that was developed by hunters, for hunters, Apex Next Evolution understands and appreciates the work and commitment it takes to preserve wildlife for future generations to come and welcomes opportunities to get involved.

Back in March, during the Idaho Fish and Game sheep capture in South Beaverhead, Apex Next Evolution was honored to provide volunteers with Apex Next Evolution elite supplements to help support the long day of captures. This sparked the beginning to a great partnership and one which Apex expects to grow in years to come.

"Our team recently attended the 38th annual Idaho Wild Sheep Banquet and Fundraiser and were blown away by the caliber of the event and the great work this organization does. The Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation and its members are making incredible strides to protect wild sheep and have set a high standard for others to follow. We look forward to continuing supporting and playing a role in their conservation efforts. **Conservation isn't just something you can idly stand by and watch happen it takes leaders to make things happen** and Idaho is certainly an example of boots on the ground leadership and vision." Says Chad Fraughton, Apex Next Evolution Chief Sales Officer.

Apex Next Evolution is a supplement company that provides products for hunters, designed to help you achieve your best, your ultimate apex. Expertly crafted and tested in the field by industry doers, each product features core and cutting-edge ingredients to help you play and perform at your peak.

Members of the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation **receive a 25% discount** on Apex Next Evolution Product when they use **code SHEEP** at www.apexnextevolution.com. Check it out to learn more about Apex Next Evolution products, gear and incredible hunt giveaways.

APEX NEXT EVOLUTION BEST COMPANIONS IN THE FIELD



CONQUER is Apex's go to for an extra boost of energy anytime during the day. Each serving offers up 120mg of natural caffeine, brain boosting nootropics to keep your eyes on the prize and ElevATP®, a unique blend of natural ingredients that promotes the body's ability to produce its own energy. It's a high-octane all-natural experience with a smooth lift, without the crash.

CQUENCH is more than just a hydration drink. In addition to key electrolytes, Quench features S7® a combination of plant-based ingredients that has been clinically shown to increase nitric oxide (NO) by 230%. The body naturally produces nitric oxide which acts as a vasodilator, signaling the blood vessels to relax, thus increasing blood flow. This aids a hunter by delivering more oxygen, fuel, and other key nutrients to working muscles, allowing the body to maintain energy, go harder, and go longer.



RECOVERY is just what the body needs after a day on the mountain. Providing not only essential amino acids and creatine HCL, this rockstar product also includes VitaCherry® Sport from whole Montmorency Tart Cherries. Montmorency Tart Cherries (MTC) have been shown to help relieve muscle and joint soreness and help athletes recovery from muscle fatigue after a tough day.

Alaska Hunting at it's Best



FREELANCE
OUTDOOR ADVENTURES



specializing in wet, cold and miserable



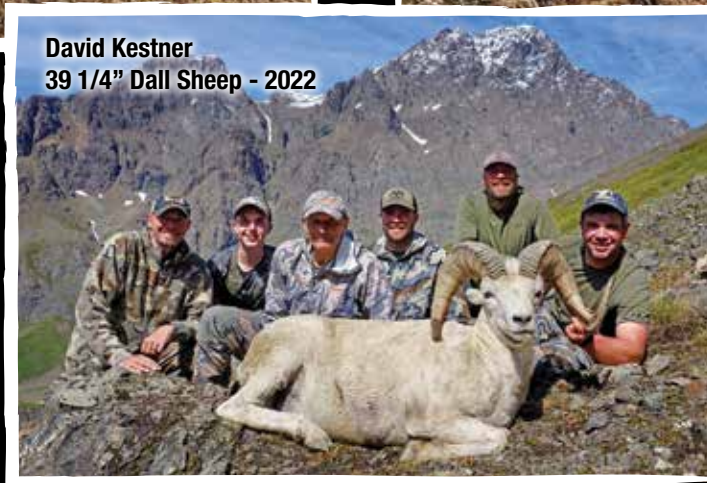
Ephi Gildor
9'9" Brown Bear - 2022



Will Waldrip
71" Moose - 2022



Willie Waldrip
8'4" Grizzly Bear - 2022



David Kestner
39 1/4" Dall Sheep - 2022

BROWN BEAR
FISHING
MOUNTAIN GOAT

MOOSE
DALL SHEEP
GRIZZLY BEAR



BROAD CANYON CUSTOMS

custom knives, pens, and fishing rods

By Jan C. Vaterlaus

208-866-4010

www.broadcanyoncustoms.com



NEW ZEALAND DREAM EXPERIENCE

2023



By James Hamilton

My hunt started out like many in 2021; Covid hit and New Zealand denied entry into the country. Unfortunately, this went on for two years, however, I was still very eager to go hunting to my dream destination and harvest several amazing animals. I stayed in contact with my guides at Southern Peak Safaris, constantly checking to see if anything had changed. Then, in January 2023 I received a text message that said “Hey mate we’re opening the country and I have you booked in March of this year”. This was music to my ears I was super excited to be traveling to New Zealand!

I began a pretty good workout regime, plus hiking as much as possible to get in shape for this hunt. I brought a Howa Precision chambered in 300 PRC. My next challenge was to become as accurate and proficient as I could with my rifle, hitting the rifle range as much as humanly possible. I also went online and started booking my flights; the wait for the dates to get close was like a kid waiting for Christmas morning. My jour-

ney and adventure of a lifetime began in Reno, Nevada on a direct flight to Los Angeles. There I ran into some travel issues with Fiji Airlines. Due to their incorrect flight information, I miss my flight. I was devastated, thinking my whole trip was ruined due to airline negligence! So, I spent the night in Los Angeles at the closest hotel near the airport. I booked a new flight with Qantas Air, flying out later the next day.

While flying halfway across the country, trying to sit still in a seat for over 20 hours was tough, I was beyond excited when we touched down in Christchurch. I eagerly waited at the luggage carousel for my KUIU hunting gear bags to appear, plus my weapon case, fully decorated in hunting stickers, to show their face. While waiting, I made several friends who were with the New Zealand police department. They were super friendly and helpful. I told them I was waiting for my firearm. So, we started talking while I waited. I eventually gave them a Challenge Coin and said “Thank You for Your

Service, I Support Law Enforcement”. They were ecstatic to receive the Challenge Coin, they had never seen them before. They proceeded to assist me with the entire custom process for entry and even helped me out of the airport with my rifle case, and gear.

I saw Sam Radovonich and Geordie Broad outside by the passenger pickup area, we had our greetings and jumped in the truck, and off we went to the lodge. We had dinner and discussed what I wanted to go after first. We also talked about the size class, plus what I was looking for. My response was, “A good time Sam, that’s it!” We both laughed and said that was an easy decision. Sam showed me pictures of several beautiful Stags, saying they would be good candidates for a nice trophy. We agreed on a stag I wanted to harvest.

After dinner that night we headed up to the hunting lodge and got our rooms situated. Since we would be traveling about 45 miles to the hunting area, we loaded up in the truck as it was going to be an early morning start. On the way up to the hunting area, we ran into several European boars on the side of the road. We checked them out and then continued up the road. Once we got to our spot we geared up and stepped off on foot to look for a few stags. Sam told me that a few Himalayan Tahr have been hanging out in the timberline so keep my eyes peeled up there. We stopped to glass momentarily and something moved beside me so I swung my head to see what it was; low and behold it was a Wallaby. I told Sam to check it out and he replied, “Oh mate you can shoot those if you want to.” I said no I didn’t want to scare other animals out of the area. We continued up the mountain to where we saw a lot of Nannies and a few small bull tahr. Geordie, my sub-guide, said, “Hey there’s something moving on the top of the hill.” We tossed up our binoculars and saw an Arapawa ram. Both Sam and Geordie said it’s a big ram, but one side is broken up. I said, “Hey man I don’t mind, if you say it’s big then let’s shoot him”. Sam grinned and asked how comfortable I was at shooting long distances. I responded that I feel pretty confident in my shooting. I got set up and chambered a round and Sam said, “638 yards,” I made my adjustments and shot. The ram hit the ground and started sliding down the mountain. Everyone told me that was an amazing shot. I watched through my scope, the animal never moved. We geared up and walked over to our trophy, took some photos, loaded up the animal, and headed back to camp.

The next morning, we were off to see if we could harvest a tahr they saw several days ago. When we got up to the hunt area, we saw over one hundred tahrs scattered across the mountain. We searched for a nice bull, finding mostly younger bulls.

We did spot a beautiful mature bull, but just as he ran into some brush. We waited several hours for him to show himself. While waiting and glassing I saw movement on the other side of the mountain. It was a beautiful big mature bull tahr that had a magnificent dark coat. Sam quickly glassed him up and said “That’s a big tahr.” I told Sam I wanted to make a stalk on the bull. I grabbed my pack. Geordie and I were off trying to close the distance for a good shot. We got to the area, I dropped my bag and we slowly crawled into position. At first glance we didn’t see the target bull, however, we did spot other bulls. Geordie said, “The big bull is the upper bull to the right.” I got ready, chambered a round in the Howa, and ranged him at 268 yards. I told Geordie “Ok I’m ready, get your earplugs in.” I got the thumbs up; the safety switch went off and BANG, one shot, and the bull disappeared. I quickly reloaded and saw the head of a bull through the tall grass. “I said wait did I miss him,” Geordie? “No mate you absolutely crushed him, he fell in his tracks.” I was looking at a second bull, only 4ft from the bull I just harvested.

We packed up and walked down to see this amazing animal. When I walked up, I couldn’t believe how big he was. The horns of this bull tahr were 13.5 inches long and just massive. Sam walked over and told me “You just shot an absolute monster tahr, my friend, congratulations!” I was super excited. We took photos before caping my trophy.

On the way off the mountain, Sam said, “Hey let’s go and try and chase that stag tonight, what do you think?” I responded back, “Heck yeah that sounds great, I’m all in buddy.” So late, as it’s getting closer to hunting hours, we take off to a new hunting area. We’re driving by tons of elk and fallow deer to get to the spot Sam told me he had seen some great stags. We parked short of the area to walk the rest of the way. We geared up and headed down a game trail. Literally, not more than 15 minutes had gone by when Sam said, got him.” I looked over



and saw two absolute giant stags standing about 700 yards away. The size of those creatures was unbelievable, and to hear them roar that close sent chills down my spine. Sam asked, "does this stag work for you, is this the stag you wanted?" I responded, "Hell yes I want that guy!" I quickly got in position. Some hinds were feeding and working their way toward us. Within about 35 minutes they walked all the way up to us, within eight feet! We both stood up and to our surprise, no bull. We looked at each other and saw one bull heading in the opposite direction of us, however, it wasn't the bull I wanted. Sam said, "I know where he went, come on, follow me." So, off we go down the game trail. We looked down towards a waterhole and I saw the stag step out of the brush. We were walking with a purpose, closing the distance to get a better view of him. I loaded the rifle and took a shot free-standing off my shoulder. I heard a thump, but the stag just stood there. Sam said, "Reload!" I quickly loaded and fired again. The stag took a step and started to wobble. Sam yelled, "Keep shooting he's hit hard." So, I loaded up and shot again and watched this massive stag fall. I couldn't believe this massive animal just took three shots from a 300 PRC, at a distance of 300 yards, and just absorbed the shots. I walked up to the stag in disbelief at this massive stag laying on the ground. I was beside myself; I had just shot a massive tahr and now an absolute giant stag all in the same day. We took pictures, took care of the animal, and started off the mountain back to the lodge. Along the way, Sam said, "How about tomorrow we go in the helicopter and hunt public land for chamois." I said, "I am all in for that idea".

So, the next morning we head over to tie in with Nigel and get the helicopter, a Hughes MD500, pulled out of the hangar and fueled up. I jumped in the back seat as the helicopter warmed

up. The next thing I know the rotors are spooled up and we are flying over the top of Nigel's vineyard toward a public land hunting area. Nigel took me for a nice scenic flight over some local tributaries and showed me some great fishing spots I might want to check out on my down days of hunting.

As we were flying, I hear on the headset, "That's a real nice stag to the right." I look over and saw a beautiful 14-point stag running up the hill with about seven hinds in tow. As we're hovering and watching, I see the stags run right into a drop camp, stopping about 50 yards from a tent. To our disbelief there was nobody home. Lol, they were out chasing chamois on the leeward spine of the mountain we later find out. We fly by an area where we see some decent chamois and decide to land and get some better eyes on them. I hear Geordie say, "There's a couple of hunters out the left door." We spotted the hunters from the drop camp we flew over earlier. We immediately lifted and flew off to an entirely new hunt location. Nigel dropped us off and flew back to the lodge. Later, Sam got a call from Nigel saying he called the hunters that we had just flown over and apologized to them, plus ensured them nobody would be in their area.

We glassed up some areas for a few hours and saw several stags and some nannies but no chamois. So, we took off on foot to a new glassing position. I heard Sam say, "I see a few chamois, but they are really far away mate." I quickly glassed them and commented, "I don't mind a beautiful walk in the mountains of New Zealand." We both laughed and off we went. Partway down the side of the mountain and Geordie stopped dead in his tracks, pointing out two wonderful chamois. One was bedded, a very large nanny; the other one was a very nice mature



male. Sam said, "Mate I don't want to make you nervous but if you want that one, we should hurry up and make a play on him." I agreed and we started down the rocky mountain slope to get into a good shooting position. I get prone and set up on my hunting pack. Sam ranged him at 538 yards and said, "It's a really far shot and a small target do you think you can shoot him from here?" I said, "Yeah, I believe I can make this shot, I just need to get stretched out" So, I chamber a round, settled the crosshair on the animal, took the safety off, and said, "Safety is off standby," and Bam, I fired. I watched as the chamois dropped in his tracks and started sliding down the hillside. I hear both Sam and Geordie say, "Damn good shot, he's down, he's down." I was ecstatic, I had just harvested a beautiful chamois. Sam looks at me and says, "Mate I was so nervous I didn't want to sound excited but that's a great buck, I didn't want you to get excited and miss." I just smiled and grabbed my pack. We figured out a route down to my trophy. After we reached the chamois, we take some photos and packed the chamois to a spot Nigel could pick us up. Sam hooked the chamois underneath to the belly hook of the helicopter, jumped in, and off we went with a chamois hanging beneath the helicopter.

We get back to the vineyard and caped the chamois for a life-size mount. Everyone told me he is a great public land chamois. Afterward, we head to the lodge for dinner. After dinner, we discussed what I wanted to do the next day. I told Sam, "Hey why don't we go back up with Nigel and hunt those stags

we saw on public land." Sam responded, "Are you sure it's kind of expensive but if that's what you want to do we can definitely do it?" I replied, "Sam when's the next time I'll be back in New Zealand? I'm here to have a great experience, see this country, plus those were some great public land stags."

Early the next morning we off to Nigel's place. We loaded the helicopter and took off. Nigel dropped us off near where we had seen the stags. Shortly thereafter we heard the stags roaring and located them. I got a beautiful 14-point stag with a 200-yard shot. I hear Sam say, "Oh mate, he's a great public land bull." I replied, "Absolutely!". We start walking down to him and spotted another stag running toward a private property fence line. Sam said, "That's a shooter stag, 14-points." He was around 300 yards and walking. I chambered a round, fired, and down he went. Sam congratulated me saying "Mate you just harvested three magnificent stags, a tahr, a chamois, and a big ram." I said, "Yes it's been a hunt of a lifetime and I'm coming back next year". We returned to the lodge. After caring for the animals, we reminisced about how great my hunt had been.

My time had come to an end. I said my goodbyes, telling them they made my dreams come true, and that I was returning in 2024. Thank you very much Southern Peak Safaris for allowing me into your family and giving me the best hunt ever. I'll see you in May 2024!

YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS



Big Lost River Outfitters
PO Box 547
Mackay, Idaho 83251
United States

Located in the beautiful Lost River Range of Idaho, Big Lost River Outfitters provides a wide range of outdoor adventure, combined with breathtaking natural scenery. Some of our exciting hunts include; Elk hunts, hunts for Mule Deer, Mountain Lion, Antelope, Big Horn Sheep, Moose, Bears and more!

Big Lost River Outfitters is a team of friends joined together by their passion for the outdoors. When we aren't guiding clients, you will most likely find us together out in the mountains looking for that next trophy big game animal. When you book a trip with us, whether it be a hunting, backpacking, trail riding, fishing, or a photo safari, you can rest assured that you will instantly become one of our friends and be treated as part of our family.

Contact us for information about your next hunt.

www.biglostriveroutfitters.com



License # 17721-0
Big Lost River Outfitters
operates in the
Salmon Challis National Forest
under a Special Use Permit.

The Worthwhile Hunt

You don't want to miss!



MURGAB COMPANY LLC YOUR MARCO POLO & IBEX OUTFITTER

Murgab Company LLC is an Outfitter based in Tajikistan. Our main animals are Large Marco Polo Argali and Pamir Ibex.

"I hunted with Murgab November of 2021. I am 78 years old and have always wanted to shoot a Marco Polo. This was the BEST HUNT OF MY LIFE. The guides, drivers, cooks, every single person, was exceptional. I highly recommend Murgab for your Marco Polo Hunt."

-Tom Sellin (Member of WSF)

BOOK YOUR HUNT TODAY!

CONTACT US ON WHATS APP OR EMAIL

+992887743399 Bekmurodov Shirinbek

+992885550222 Nurlan Rahmonov

Shirinbek0494@gmail.com

Find us on Instagram! @tajikistanhunting



WILD SHEEP SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Join Today!



Over \$1 Million+ invested on the landscape over the last 3 years.
Become a Member today to help ensure we have "WILD SHEEP FOREVER"

www.wildsheepsociety.com

EXPERIENCE THE FRANK CHURCH WILDERNESS



HEART OUTFITTERS LLC



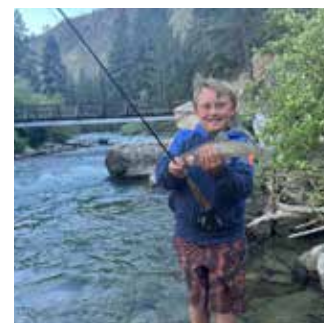
- BACK COUNTRY STAYS
- LARGE GAME GUIDED HUNTS
- TRAIL RIDES
- SUPREME FLY FISHING

Something for the whole family. Located in the Middle Fork of the Frank Church Wilderness. Family owned and operated.

ELK/DEER * MOUNTAIN LION * BLACK BEAR * WOLF * SHEEP/GOAT * PACK TRIPS * FISHING * TRAIL RIDES



Gus and Courtney
208-993-0054
208-993-0666
Salmon, Idaho
heartxoutfitters@gmail.com
www.heartxoutfitters.com



WILD SHEEP
Foundation
PROUD TO SUPPORT
WSF



MONTANA
SILVERSMITHS
JEWELRY & BUCKLES SINCE 1973

BRAND OF CHAMPIONS

www.montanasilversmiths.com | Follow Us





EUROHUNTS SPAIN
SINCE 1999

Best hunting concessions in Spain
Most experienced professional guides
Luxury selected accommodations
Spotless reputation

www.eurohunts.es
info@eurohunts.es





Owyhee Range Survey

In May, Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation members had the opportunity to work with the Oregon WSF in the Owyhee Range to conduct a bighorn sheep survey. With 120 volunteers across two chapters, we were able to cover 47/50 units and observed 21 different groups of bighorns consisting of 82 sheep total. Of those 82 sheep, 41 were ewes, 14 were lambs and, 27 were rams.

This effort was part of the ION partnership with Oregon Wild Sheep Foundation and Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife with funding by the Wild Sheep Foundation.

Naylor's

AUTO REPAIR

10% off all maintenance and repairs for Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation members.

Naylor's Auto Repair
 7451 W. Lemhi St.
 Boise, Idaho 83709
 208-343-0732
www.naylorsautorepairidaho.com

Ed's Ed Staub & Sons
Energy. Community. Service.

Propane Residential & Commercial Construction Propane Appliances Installation & service




No Hidden Fees
Competitive Pricing
Great Customer Service
Call Today!

208.634.3833
 McCall-13872 HWY 55


 208.461.4556
 Nampa-2508 2nd St. S

SEARPRO
www.searpro.org

Light up your adventure with - SearPro -

MULTI-USE TORCH

The **ULTIMATE** campfire starter!

SAVE 20%
DISCOUNT CODE:
IDWILDSHEEP20



**PROUD SPONSOR
OF THE
OUTDOORS**

FIND US IN IDAHO

**IDAHO SALES@WILLIESDISTILLERY.COM
HTTPS://MIXBLENDENJOY.COM**

WILLIESDISTILLERY.COM



ENJOY RESPONSIBLY



MAVEN



*RS3.2 Riflescope
5-30x50 FFP*



Award winning optics exclusively sold direct with no middle man and no retail markup.
mavenbuilt.com / Lander, Wyoming / 800.307.1109



An Orange County Girl

By Leanne Woslum

Right about the time Edd got the old Winchester .270, he and my older brother Dan both got their drivers licenses. That weekend Edd and I had driven the 15 miles around and through a multitude of dairy farms and orange groves in order to get to the Long Beach auditorium where a 19 year old black entertainer by the name of Little Richard was playing a three hour mini concert that evening. Back in those days several local groups such as the Righteous Brothers and Johnny "Night Train" Otis had not as yet attained world fame and we could go to Long Beach or Balboa and see one of their three or four hour stage shows for as little as 50 cents. I was 15, Edd was an old man of 17 and our parents would have thrashed us soundly had they known where we were going.

That evening was pretty entertaining as the Super Star to be played what was considered in 1956 to be pretty wild and "dangerous" stuff. According to the adults of the time just listening to this "jungle music" threatened to corrupt the inner core of your brain and would eventually lead to all manner of uncontrollable anti social behavior. Actually, I don't remember a whole lot about the music that night, but I can recall with absolute certainty the events of the next day.

During those extreme bygone days Edd and Danny would, whenever possible, grab up their pellet guns and go stomping the groves looking for birds, rabbits or any other creature that might have had the misfortune to cross paths with these two marauders. During the last two years of this period their weaponry had graduated to the .22 rim-fire level and last December Edd had become the envy of all their buddies when his Dad, for Christmas, gave him what was for those times the wonder gun of the century, a brand new .270 Winchester and a full box of Winchester's 130 grain Silvertips.

I had always been intrigued by the boy's excursions into, what in the 1950s was the Orange County back country bush, but when I asked to go along I was generally rebuffed with the "this is men's work" attitude. Every once in a while, the boys would actually bring home something for the pot

and of course this was the point where the woman's work was supposed to start. Back then I guess I was considered a bit of a Tom boy, as I could generally be found playing baseball in the street rather than indulging in the more frilly stuff that girls of the time were expected to do.

That year their outings took on a lot more serious tone as they were able to venture the 10 or so miles to where the orange groves stopped, and the Laguna Hills started. These arid sagebrush hills had pretty good populations of black tails, and they literally teamed with cotton tailed rabbits. As Dan now had access to the family 12 gauge and Edd had a deer rifle they made up a pretty formidable hunting team.

The only problem was it was too far to walk to the hunting area. One needed to drive a car and cars run on gasoline and gasoline costs money. "OK guys here's the deal, I'll put \$1.00 worth of my baby sitting money in the gas tank but I get to go along on the trip." They pondered that one for a while, but the primordial urge for the hunt finally overcame their horror of taking a girl along.

My mother thought I had absolutely lost every grain of brain matter that I had ever possessed when I told her I wanted to go hunting with the boys. "A couple of the ladies and I are going to do some shopping. Wouldn't you rather come along with us?" "I think I would rather go to the hills." "Ok but you're not going to like it," said mom.

The day after the afore mentioned Little Richard concert, the two guys and I loaded up in the 1942 Chevy and headed out to the other side of the El Toro Marine base. The area we were to hunt that day was in the exact location that 10 years hence would become the home of the University of California, Irvine.

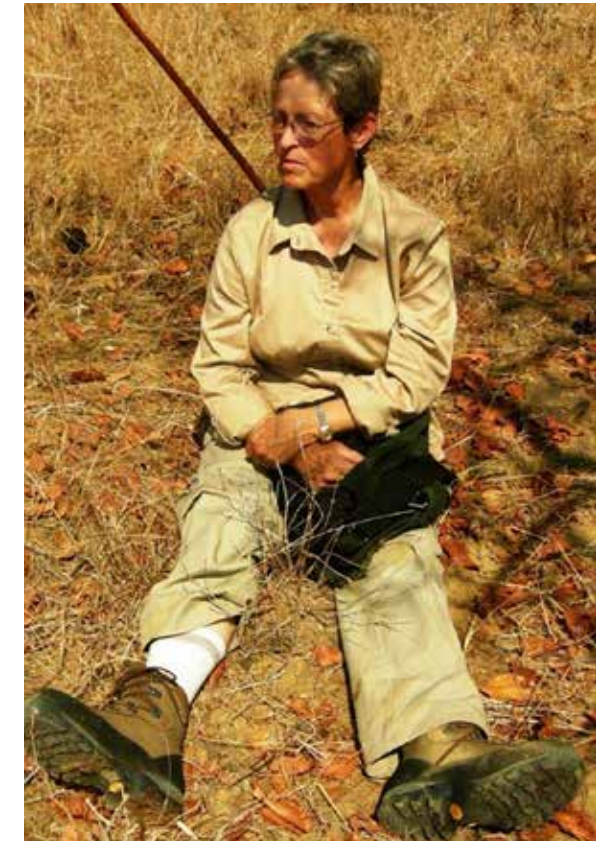
We saw literally hundreds of deer that morning but try as we might, we couldn't grow the requisite one inch of horn on any of them in order to make it legal. The September opener of Southern California deer season can make for tempera-

tures into the 90s and this day was no exception. Of course, when preparing to leave home the full extent of our planning was to gather up the guns and get on the road. There was absolutely no thought given to taking along a bite of food, nor nary as much as a swallow of water. Even before the sun was directly overhead, we were three mighty hot and thirsty teenagers as we turned and headed for home. We had traversed about half the distance back to the car, Edd and Dan were about 50 yards off to my right and I was skirting along the edge of a dry alfalfa field. I had been sort of daydreaming about how good that cold lemonade was going to taste, when I was jolted back to reality by a little jet propelled fur ball that went scurrying out from under my feet. I was about to say "hey guys look at the cute little rabbit," when suddenly the ball of fur did a full mid-air summersault, plopped to the ground then lay perfectly still. This was of course closely followed by the report of Dan's 12 gauge.

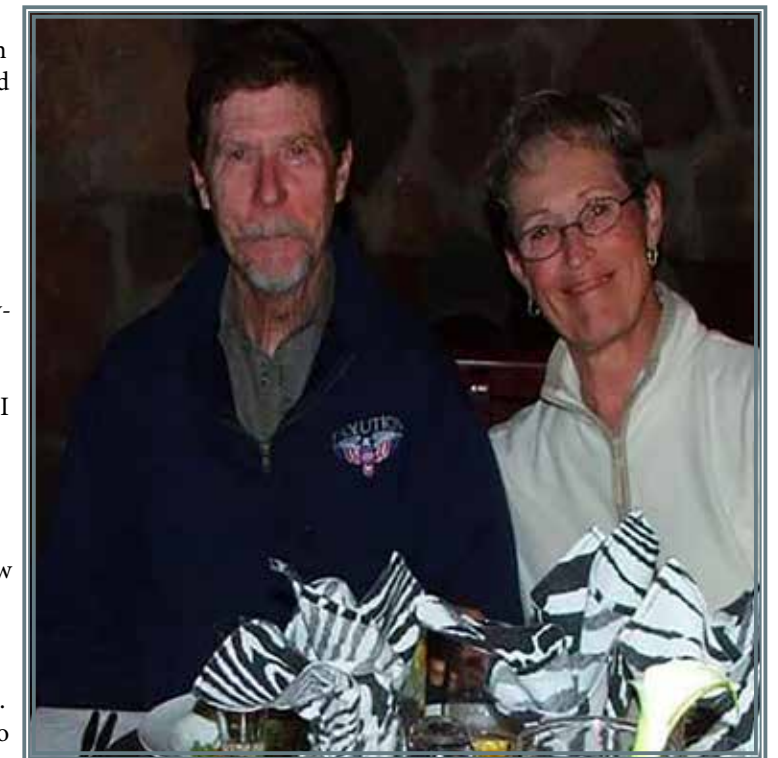
I was in complete shock and almost in tears. "Why did he do that? What's the matter with him?" I thought. I was suddenly madder than hell and wanted to punch them both in the nose for their wanton assault on the defenseless little creature. "Wait a minute girl. You have cooked a whole bunch of those tasty young critters in your life and somehow or another the thing had to get killed and skinned before you could make it into those delicious morsels of fried rabbit. What seems to be the problem?" I had never before even seen a chicken killed and I guess at my young age, I somehow thought those pieces of meat had grown on a tree in little plastic bags. By the time we arrived back home I was in a better frame of mind about the whole thing and that fried rabbit with biscuits, gravy and iced tea tasted mighty good that night.

40 years later as Edd and I were walking along the edge of a dry Wyoming hayfield, the sun was just starting to illuminate the rolling sage brush hills and cotton tails seemed to be everywhere. There were now two grown children and two grandchildren with whom we shared our hunting experiences but at times like that, those four decade old memories of that first hunt always came flooding back.

"Ok here we are," broke the spell as our guide, Glen, came to an abrupt halt in front of what looked like a flag pole that was situated on the north end of the hayfield and about 20 yards from a natural dam that held a small pool of water. "Ok here we are." "Where?" I queried. "This is your antelope stand," said the man. I still didn't get it. "Right there at the top of that pole," he answered. As I gazed up at the 30 foot spindly eight inch diameter rod that jutted straight up out of the sage, the butterflies in my guts went into full tilt rampage. There was now a little breeze starting to blow and the two foot by three foot piece of plywood at the top of the pole looked more like it belonged on a four masted schooner than on a Wyoming sheep ranch. "You've got to be kidding me" I managed to croak out. "I'm afraid of heights. That thing looks like its going to



Above: Leanne Woslum taking a quick break after a long, hard and hot stalk on Dr. Tim's buffalo hunt. Below: Edd & Leanne's 50th Wedding Anniversary, 2009.



fall down. What if I have to go potty?" I was talking a mile a minute but no one was listening to a word I was saying.

At first, I thought it was a put on and someone was going to start laughing. We would then all share in the fun as they took me to my real blind that had been dug into the side of a hill somewhere. No way. These guys were serious. "Ok I'm an experienced hunter. I have been fried, broiled, steamed, and snowed on before. If these guys can do it so can I." 20 minutes later the wind had picked up and it started a miserable cold drizzling rain. I was clinging to the skimpy piece of plywood for dear life and even if the new Boone and Crocket record buck was to casually stroll by, there would be no way could I come to full draw and shoot my bow.

I had until three years previous been strictly a gun person and had shot quite a bit of competition in various types of both rifle and pistol matches. Even though I didn't have much field experience with the more primitive hunting tool, I had always been fascinated with the art and discipline required to keep those arrows all clustered together in tight little groups. As a consequence, Edd had on my 50th birthday surprised me with a fully outfitted and tuned Mathew Solo Cam. Since that occasion we had practiced extensively and participated in several Idaho 3D matches. I had never previously, however, drawn my bow with the intention of shooting anything other than paper or plastic.

That stormy day atop the flagpole was one of the most physically miserable experiences of my entire previous existence. I did not, however, wimp out and use the emergency radio that had been provided. Admittedly I never drew my bow even once but neither did I holler uncle. After 11 hours of fighting the wind and rain, I wasn't too sure I could negotiate the spindly ladder but eventually I made it to the bottom and immediately kissed the ground. When the guys came to pick me up I had only one thing to say. "Where in the Sam hell is my rifle?"

Up until five years previous to this antelope excursion, all of my rifle hunting had been conducted with Edd's 1959 vintage Winchester Model 70 in .270 caliber. I had learned to shoot with this well worn piece of American history, and I never had any desire to use any thing else. Problem was Edd felt the same way about his old gun. As a consequence, most of our mule deer and white tail hunts during this period were conducted on a share basis with the family's .270. One day I would be the shooter and he was the spotter; we would then, depending on how successful we had been, work out an equitable rotation as to who was doing what that day. This worked quite well for a number of years while hunting close to home on our Idaho ranch but when we began to expand our hunting horizons to include wild sheep and elk, we decided one of us must give up our possession rights to the heirloom and seek out another rifle.

You can imagine who won that custody battle. Edd felt pretty

guilty about it, however, and assured me that I would get along just fine with the replacement that he was working on. Six months later looking like the proverbial cat that done ate the canary, my mischievous spouse, with a bit of over acted nonchalance, came into the house and set down a dilapidated, antique gun case that looked as if it had been dragged behind a truck. He then said: "time's getting close for our elk hunt. You may want to try this out on the range tomorrow." As my husband is well known for pranks wherein one is scared absolutely spit less by extremely large spiders or highly teed off snakes, I had no idea what I expected to jump out of that grungy looking hard case. I was therefore in no way prepared for what I saw upon opening the rusty old hinges. There, in stark contrast to the motley old gun box, reposed the most beautiful piece of hardware and walnut that I had ever beheld. This was indeed a thing of beauty. The 1951 model 70 receiver had been subtly matte blued to replicate how it had appeared when leaving the store 40 years previous. The 24 inch Krieger match barrel was a high luster deep blue and the rich color and dark grain of the oil finished stock wrapped the whole thing into an incredibly striking master piece of art. On this occasion I must confess to being horribly fickle, for as I gently picked up my new custom .280 Ackley, I completely forgot about the old beat up .270.

Edd and I have now been married 62 years. Since that day of the big rifle surprise, my .280 and I have been on quite an array of North American and African soirees, and I have learned to trust my one and only rifle implicitly. I'm sure that no non-hunter would ever in their life time understand, but this inanimate piece of metal and wood and I, had formed a strong bond and were almost like buddies. The day after my Wyoming ordeal by flagpole, I was in need of a substantial boost in self confidence and as I slid the model 70 out of its soft case, I knew this day was going to be a whole lot different from the previous.

As the sun came up the air was crisp and fresh from the passing cold front and the pungent aroma of the dampened sage, combined with the brisk temperature, was invigorating for both prey and hunters alike. Everywhere we looked Critters of various descriptions were on the move and the prairie was literally alive with activity. The antelope were in full rut and in every quadrant bucks of all sizes were jousting one another and prowling the sage for loose and friendly does.

About twenty minutes before daylight we had positioned ourselves on the edge of a small arroyo that ran 2/3 of the length of our assigned 2,000 acre pasture. This slight recession in the topography allowed us to move semi crouched without putting our binocular equipped quarry on the alert. After several hours of spotting and several dry run stalks, we saw what appeared, at about half a mile, to be an exceptional buck. Even at extreme distance it was obvious this was an animal with specific purpose. We had been studying him for about five minutes and during this entire time he never stood still

for hardly a second as he methodically prodded his band of does up the side of a steep brushy draw. This old boy was taking his girls and getting out of town.

After a quick pow wow, we decided that if we stayed real low in our little ditch we could get within 300-400 yards of the ridge and have a reasonable shot. The only problem was there would be no time to look him over for very long. These animals were extremely wary and weren't going to wait around for us to make up our mind. It took 12 excruciatingly long, hands and knees type minutes to gain our vantage point. During this time the band had moved about 200 yards, but they had paralleled our course and were not any farther away now than they had been previously. Very cautiously we snaked our way over the edge to take a peek.

I know from past experience that in the heat of the moment, with your hands sweating and the adrenalin pounding in your ears, this is no time to make rational decisions regarding shoot, don't shoot. We had therefore sized him up from afar and decided I would shoot if the opportunity presented itself.

As we gained the desired elevation and slowly peeked over, I don't know what I was expecting, but 38 pairs of coal black eyes riveting me into the rocks and sage was not foremost in my mind. Edd whispered 376 yards; he is heavy and very dark and looks real good to me. Somehow, I got the rifle into position without spooking the whole herd that was now very switched on. I was in a reasonably steady position and with the cross hairs of my Leupold on the 125 pound lead buck, he looked to be about the size of a Hereford bull. As has happened to me on previous hunts, the gun created no noise and there was no apparent recoil. It was tomb like quiet and I could hear Edd breathing 15 ft. away.

I always have a twinge of remorse after taking a live creature from the wilds, but as we walked to the downed buck we saw the small band of does continuing their journey up the hill. Already another mature buck was moving forward to take the old guy's place, and was prodding the herd onward.

Authors Bio Data

Although an avid tag along hunter, Leanne had never fired a rifle or pistol until she was 40 years old. Since that date she has become an avid hunter and competitor and has successfully pursued all manner of the world's ungulates.

At age 44 she won her first local pistol match in Northern California. She has since won numerous state and regional titles plus she won The Tactical Three Gun world championship twice and was runner up champion three times. In 1994 she guided the Springfield Armory's rifle/ pistol team to the runner up champion position for the National Sportsmen's Team Challenge.

All you guys take note, get your wives and daughters involved. They can do it too.

YELLOW WOLF



ADVENTURES



MONTANA
WILD SHEEP
FOUNDATION



Nomad's
FISHING ADVENTURES



POST
INSURANCE

www.postins.com

Est. 1986



CONSTRUCTION INSURANCE AND BONDING SPECIALISTS

With a high level of integrity dating back to 1986, Post Insurance is a locally owned independent insurance agency that has serviced the insurance and bonding needs of the construction industry throughout the Pacific Northwest. The historical experience combined with its well-respected reputation among insurance and bonding carriers gives Post Insurance a competitive advantage in negotiating and delivering solid results to its clients.

BONDING/SURETY:

Large limits on In-house authority and power of attorney from various surety providers for bid and performance bonds.

Over 100 years of combined experience throughout the office.

In-depth understanding and guidance regarding financial analysis specifically pertaining to surety.

Strong relationships forged over time with our surety carriers allows us to get more complex scenarios handled accordingly.

CONSTRUCTION INSURANCE:

WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE - Post Insurance is appointed with the top carriers that specialize in construction, including the ability to handle multi-state exposures.

STANDARD LINES OF COVERAGE - property, general liability, auto liability, excess/umbrella liability, inland marine, builders-risk, contractors E&O, EPLI, D&O, etc.

SERVICE EXPECTATION:

BONDING MANAGEMENT- Bonding accounts are serviced by both your bonding agent, as well as our internal bonding account manager. Our service setup and in-house authorities allow us to accommodate rush scenarios and same day bid deliveries, so that you don't miss out on any opportunities!

INSURANCE MANAGEMENT- Accounts are serviced by both your agent, as well as an account manager with the expectation of same day turnaround on all the various certificates and requests that are specific to construction. Other services included are contract review, loss control assistance, internal claims management/review, help with audit review/discrepancies, etc.

ANDREW ELAM

andrewelam@postins.com

208.336.5600 | www.postins.com



HUNTING
USA



Includes
10 Year Passport Warranty
For more information visit:
bit.ly/leicapassportwarranty

NEW!



Leica Geovid Pro 42. Master the distance.

No matter where you go hunting – forest, mountains, or field – an ethical shot is what counts in the end. Now you can choose more safety, higher precision, and greater ease of use: with the new Leica Geovid Pro 42 models. Powerful all-rounders, these compact rangefinder binoculars offer superlative optical performance. The advanced Applied Ballistics® software delivers the exact ballistics solution at the touch of a button, and the superior Class 1 Laser ensures precise measurements in just 0.3 seconds.

Models: Geovid Pro 8x32, 10x32, 8x42 (NEW), 10x42 (NEW), 8x56 (NEW)

Discover more – visit your authorized dealer or explore leica-geovid-pro.com



Ballistics
made easy



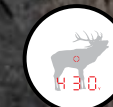
Leica
ProTrack



Atmospheric
Sensors



Applied
Ballistics



Calculation

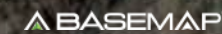


Bluetooth

30 YEARS
LEICA PIONEER OF
RANGEFINDING



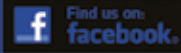
@LeicaHuntingUSA



SUNDANCE TAXIDERMY



BOB ULSHAFFER
3104 E. LESLIE DR.
MERIDIAN, IDAHO 83646
(208)-376-6330
EMAIL: ULSHAFERSUNDANCE@GMAIL.COM



MTNTOUGH+

THE FITNESS APP TRUSTED BY THE DEDICATED

"Best-in-class" Fitness Programs

- Thousands of workouts & dozens of unique programs specifically built for the beginner to elite mountain athlete.
- Train at home or in the gym from 20-50 minutes with no equipment, minimal equipment or a full gym.
- Build mental toughness, increase strength, and improve your endurance.

FREE 14 DAY TRIAL
Get The MTNTOUGH+ App

Available on Google Play, App Store, and Roku TV.

THANK YOU TO THE

FOLLOWING

CONSERVATION PARTNER'S

Peyton Blackner

Brahn Bjornson

Wes Curry

Lee Howard

Glenn Landrus

Chuck Middleton

Dr. Bruce Mincher

Brad & Gail Morlock

Dick Nachbar

Mike Schlegel

Jim & Shaina Warner

XKG Series

ANY TAG.
ANY TIME.

Scan for XKG gear
kingscamo.com/xkg

BLACKFOOT FIXED BLADE 2.0
MAGNACUT EDITION

**WORKING KNIVES
FOR WORKING PEOPLE.**

MONTANA KNIFE CO.™

OWNED BY MASTER BLADESMITH JOSH SMITH
WWW.MONTANAKNIFECOMPANY.COM
@MONTANAKNIFECOMPANY

MKC
MONTANA KNIFE CO.

WARNING: MKC knives are incredibly sharp out of the box and may cause lacerations of the skin if handled improperly.

WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED

BY JUSTIN RUSSELL

Hunting Rocky Mountain Bighorns was never on my hunting bucket list until I met my now wife. We would travel down the Salmon River to fish for steelhead with her and her family every fall. Often on these trips, I would see bighorns from camp or while fishing. I admired their powerful ability to climb the rugged terrain in the river canyon.

I was able to volunteer with the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation and Idaho

Fish and Game for the Spring of 2022 to capture, collar, and evaluate the health of bighorn sheep. This hands-on, up-close, experience made me respect these animals even more. This experience placed them at the top of my bucket list! Little did I know, I would acquire a once-in-a-lifetime tag to hunt these magnificent creatures within five years of applying for the tag.

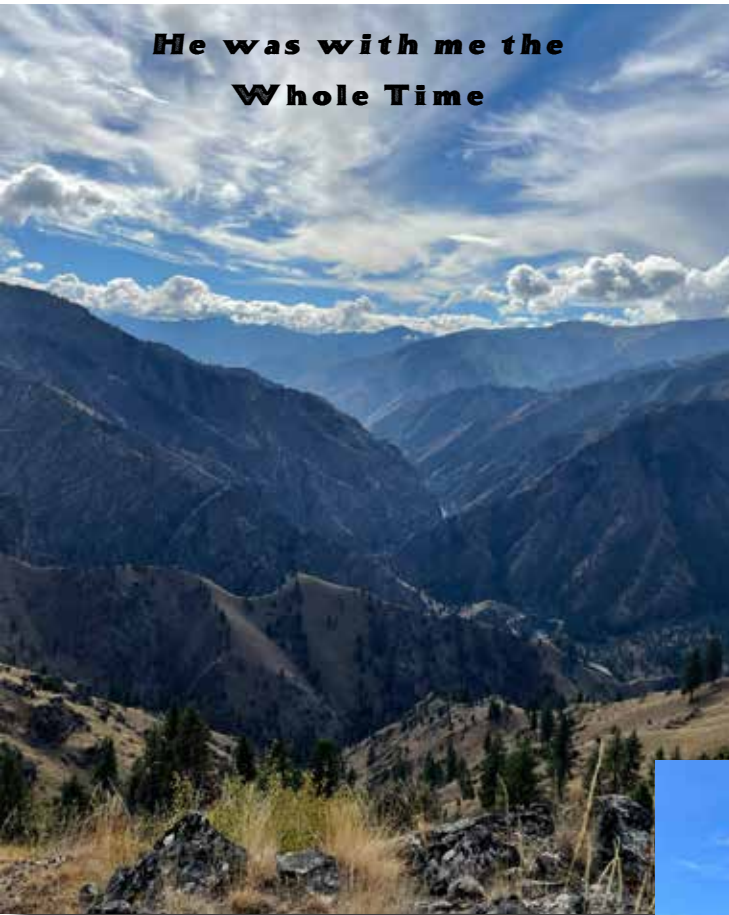
Idaho's largest wildfire in 2022 threw a wrench in my scouting plans.



Between the smoke and road closures, my scouting time was limited and unfortunately, I didn't locate many sheep. A big thanks to Doug Sayer for spending time with me, and giving me knowledge of the unit, and Jim Warner for telling me multiple times that the end of the season is better than the beginning. This helped reduce my stress about the smoke.

September flew by. I only had a couple of outings and no mature rams were spotted. My best friend Brock Maynard devoted four days off from work to come to help out. We decided to backpack into a spot that looked good from previous scouting, e-scouting, and harvest statistics obtained from IDFG. Having an extra set of eyes was key as Brock made a miracle spot, into the setting sun, on a group of rams; one standing out above the rest. The next morning started early with a trip to refill water from a spring. Brock again spotted the sheep before I did. We made a plan, but unfortunately, the sheep didn't like our plan. They decided to drop almost 1,500 in elevation to bed down at the bottom of the canyon. We had to move multiple times to keep the wind in our favor in order to close the distance to 328 yards. After setting up phone scopes, cameras, and a rock-solid shooting rest I was ready. I was calm as could be dry firing and going through my shot routine. However, when I told Brock I was ready, and clicked the safety off my heart started pounding! I took a little longer to shoot than normal but made it count. The 1982 Ruger M77 30.06 I used was my dad's safe. The countless hours at the reloading





**He was with me the
Whole Time**

refill our water bottles from the same spring that 17 hours ago started our day. We made it back to camp and had a quick dinner; sleep came easy that night! The next morning we took it easy and made a couple of pack trips to the side by side.

I will never forget the many memories from that hunt. I was able to repay Brock. I help with the easy part of packing out his stud late-season mule deer buck. He hunted for 17 days alone before locating this buck the night before I arrived at camp.

My biggest thank you is to my wife for being so understanding and supportive of my need to go chase my dreams and challenge myself. She's the glue that holds our house together. Love Ya Kas!



bench and the shooting range paid off; the ram expired less than two feet from his bed from the single shot.

After the shot, I had many emotions. My father had passed away the year before and he was always one of the first people I called or sent pictures to after a successful hunt. He was with me the whole time though. After I composed myself, we realized the phone had run out of memory before the shot. It didn't matter at that point, I just wanted to get my hands on that ram.

A couple of the smaller rams stayed within about 50 yards the whole time we took pictures and boned out my ram. The hike out of the canyon was the worst pack out I've ever had. I picked the wrong way from looking at onX map and we ended up in an avalanche chute and blown down trees. The 60-70-degree weather didn't help us either. Luckily, we found a spring to refill our water bottles. Ten hours of packing later, and battling leg cramps we made it to the trailhead. We hung the meat and dropped most everything from our packs. Afterward, we made a trip to



**GETTING YOU WHERE
YOU NEED TO BE ...**

NO PROBLEM.



TOYOTA CERTIFIED

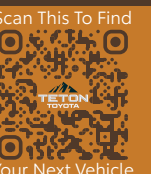
✓ **12 Month / 12k Mile**
Limited Comprehensive Warranty

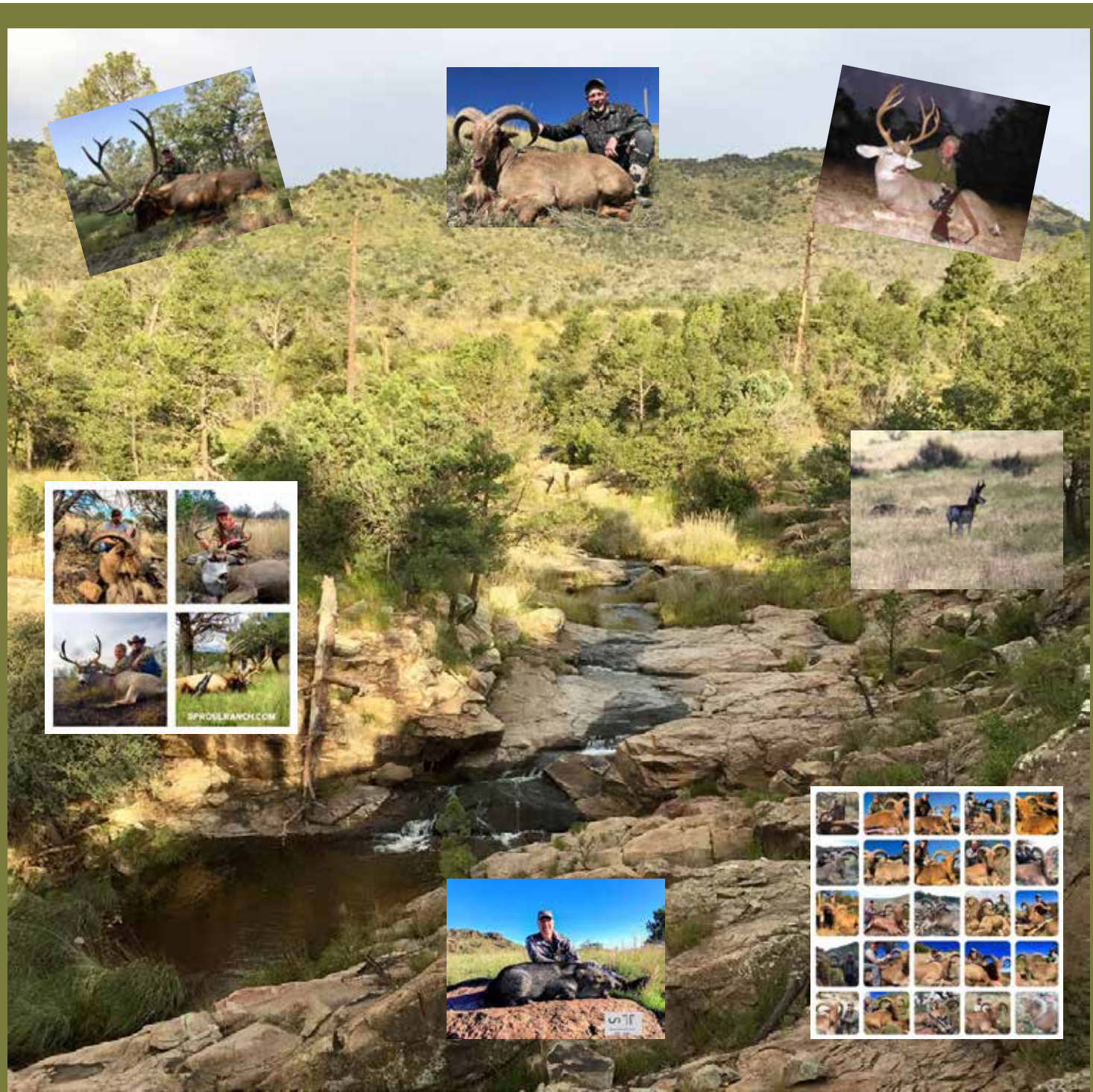
✓ **7-year / 100k Mile**
Limited Powertrain Warranty

✓ **Roadside Assistance**
7 year/100k mile, 24 hour roadside assistance



WWW.TETONTOYOTA.COM
(208) 522-2911
2252 W. SUNNYSIDE RD. • IDAHO FALLS, ID





H.E. Sproul Ranch
www.sproulranch.com
 EST. 1886

Come hunt our top 5 species of far west Texas!!!

Contact Roy Hurley: 1 (432) 244-9221
rhurley@sproulranch.com

High volume dove hunting.



If thinking of wingshooting...
 the trip of a lifetime!

The best option to share a few days with
 close friends in a family atmosphere in the
 heart of Argentina's countryside.

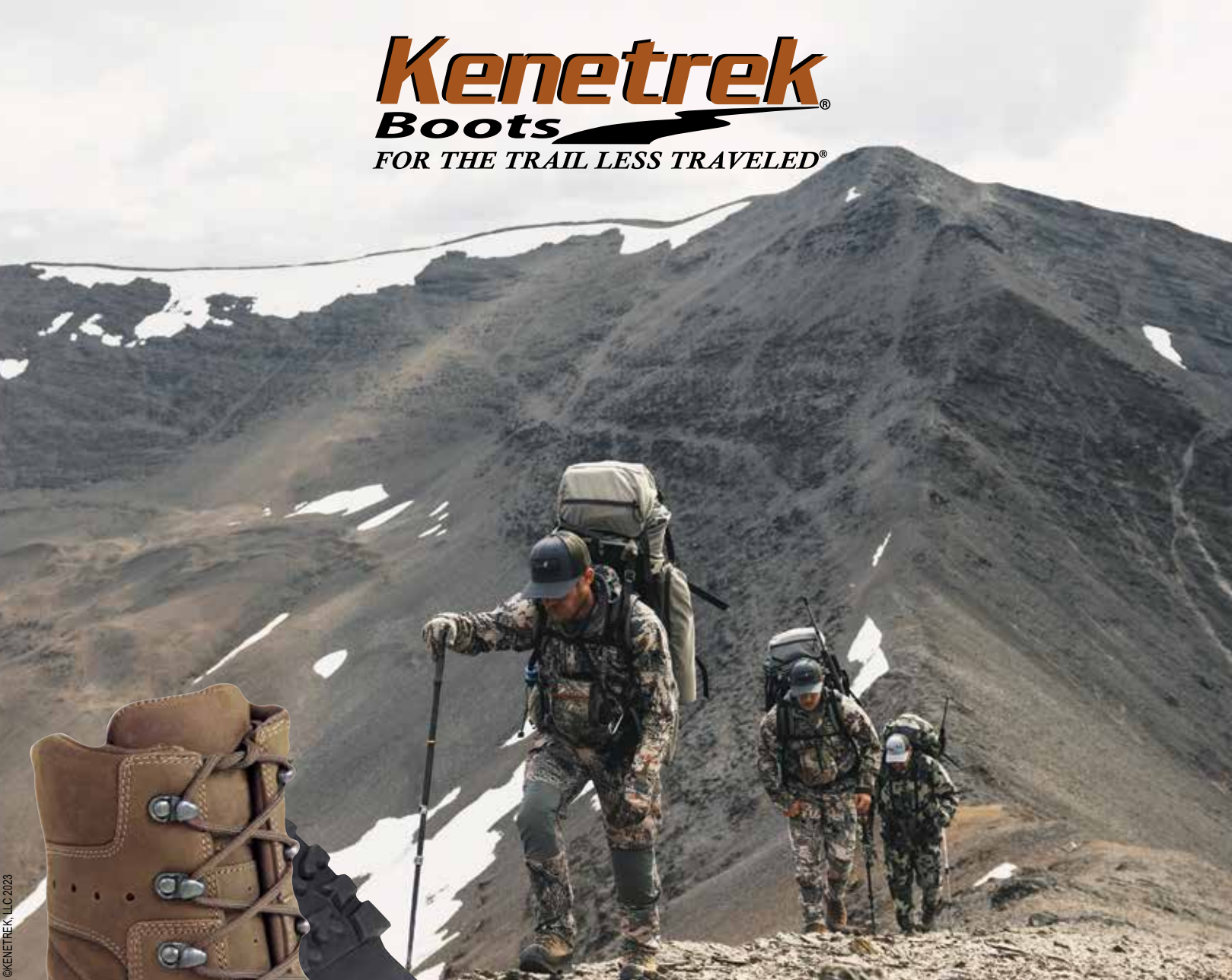
Unlimited number of doves from dawn to sunset
 throughout the year. 1,000 to 2,000 rounds a day
 guaranteed. Dove, duck, charata, pigeon and golden
 "dorado" fishing combined at the hunter's choice just a
 few steps from our lodging areas... the perfect
 combination of world-class wing shooting and
 outstanding guest service.



+54 9 351 564 5040 info@wingshootingunlimited.com /dove_hunt

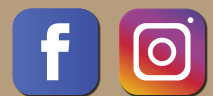
www.wingshootingunlimited.com

Kenetrek
Boots
FOR THE TRAIL LESS TRAVELED®



MOUNTAIN EXTREME

Built for unyielding traction, support and comfort in the most rugged terrain and weather. Thick leather uppers wrap around supportive nylon midsoles, on top of high traction outsoles. Bottom line: They make it possible to get anywhere you need to go in total comfort.



VISIT US ON SOCIAL



WWW.KENETREK.COM
800-232-6064



Browning X-Bolt Mountain Pro

SEE MORE AT BROWNING.COM

THE UNEXPECTED STORM

BY: WYATT WARNER

It all started the evening of my birthday dinner with my mom and dad, Jim, and Shaina. I showed up after work. After dinner, I was getting ready to leave when Dad came in from the garage all pumped up to check the Nevada draw results. Both Mom and Dad were unsuccessful. Although my chances were pretty slim, I was still riding on a little hope, as I had been lucky in the past. As I patiently waited for Dad to check the results he said, "There must be something wrong with your application, there is no way you drew one of the best Nevada rifle elk tags with only four points!" We pulled up the regulation to cross-check the results and sure enough I had pulled off some luck, drawing a great elk tag in Nevada. Realization sat in and the excitement began to build. I started calling family and friends, telling them the exciting news. I had one final call, the one I wanted to tell the most, my big brother Triston. He was out of service at the property in Mackay. We ended up heading to dinner to celebrate my birthday, plus having a great elk tag in my pocket.

The next day Dad and I had plans to go to Salmon. On our way back we would go to Mackay so I could tell Triston. Throughout the day I was going over ideas with Dad on how I was going to tell Triston. When we finally arrived, I was so anxious I jumped out of the truck and ran over to him as calmly as possible. I handed him my phone and asked him to read what was on my phone. He looked at my phone for a second then looked up and asked, "Are you guys kidding me? He continues to comment. "Wyatt that tag is as hard to draw as some of the sheep tags in Nevada! Well, I guess I am gonna need to take some more time off!"

A couple of weeks later a group of us were in Idaho Falls for the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation's first-time east Idaho satellite event for the Idaho Bighorn Sheep Lottery draw-

ing. Our good family friend, Carter Swain, congratulated me on drawing an amazing elk tag. After the event, we all got together for dinner. During dinner, Carter said he had some extra vacation time this year and offered to come help spot or pack if we needed another person to help on the hunt. Some of the greatest hunts are with family and friends so I was excited to have Carter willing to come and enjoy this hunt with us.

The opener was about a month away. The team that was going to support me on my hunt was my dad, Triston, Carter, and our friend KC Ramsey, and Reed Dalton, a good friend of KC, Triston, and my dad. Reed is a great elk hunter and knows the area really well. Reed was making plans to help us as much as he could as he knew of a couple of bulls and wanted to help us find one or both of them.

The weekend before my hunt Reed had a window to go do some looking and located one of the two bulls he was hoping to find. The bull was in a good spot for us to locate him, as long as we didn't get any bad weather making it difficult to get into the area. Reed also sent me pictures of the two bulls he mentioned earlier. Those pictures really pumped me up as both bulls would be incredible!

Dad and I headed to Nevada Thursday night after I got off work. The 7-hour drive was long but exciting even though we didn't get to the hotel until 2:30 in the morning. KC was not going to be able to make it, because his son Karson's football team made it to state and his scheduled playoff game was going to make it too hard for KC to join us. Reed was available to be with us Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Friday, we joined up with Reed so he could start showing us the area and look for the two bulls or another target bull.

Triston and Carter would head down later in the day. My hunt opened on Sunday so this gave us some time to learn the area with Reed and hopefully locate a bull to go after on opening morning. I was excited to get to meet Reed as I have heard so much about him. We covered a lot of the country and glassed up some bulls, however, no sign of the two bulls Reed wanted to find or any new ones. Fortunately, no bad weather had hit yet so we could still get around good. Dad and I got back to the hotel just as Triston and Carter made it into town. We went to dinner and updated them about what we had learned from Reed and what we had seen.

Saturday we all hooked up with Reed and went to work looking for the two bulls or a new target bull. Opening day was the next day so everyone was excited to locate a target bull. We ended the day not locating a target bull but full of excitement. We made a plan; that Triston, Reed, and I would take a road to get us up on top of the big ridge where Reed had seen the one bull last weekend. There was a canyon we had not been able to look into from our vantage points the few days and we hoped the bull might be in there. Dad and Carter would go to spotting knobs looking over this big ridge in hopes someone would turn up a bull.

Sunday, opening morning, we woke up full of excitement. We had some weather come in through the night that left us with 2-3 inches of new snow to deal with. Triston and I joined up with Reed as planned. Dad and Carter headed for their spotting knobs. The road Reed planned to take was covered in snow. Reed made a couple of tries trying to get up the road but it was just too slick so we had to take an alternate road to get into the ridge. To make matters worse, the fog had settled in really bad, covering all the ridge tops almost clear into the valleys around us. Dad and Carter could not see anything from their locations.

We had to start making a move so we headed up the ridge and immediately ran into some bulls. There was a nice bull in the group but we thought



we could do better. We worked the right side of the ridge. On our way down the ridge, we stopped and glassed. As we moved further down the ridge where Reed had last seen one of the two bulls, we spotted a dead elk. You could tell it had been dead for some time. Likely from one of the two previous hunts. As we walked up to the bull we realized it was one of the two bulls we had been looking for. It was definitely deflating to see this bull gone but we knew the other bull was there somewhere so we pushed on. The fog finally lifted some towards the evening but it was just tough conditions all day. We found a few more bulls before the end of the day but none I wanted to take yet. Reed had to leave that night. The weather was showing we had a big storm coming. Our plan was to head back to the same area. Dad and Carter would work different spotting knobs in hopes they could get eyes on a target bull. Triston and I would get back on top and try to be in a position to make a move if they found a good bull.

Monday morning, we woke up to more snow and could see we had heavy winds through the night. We decided that we would stick to our plan. Triston and I headed up, busting through snow drifts. We got to a point where the road was drifted in. We tried it two times, there was no way of getting through it. So, we hunted in areas we could. Dad and Carter worked in other areas trying to find a bull. Carter saw a bull a long way off that he thought had potential but there was no way for him to get closer before dark.

Tuesday morning again brought more snow and it continued to snow heavily. Everything was socked in, making it impossible to glass. We moved around the unit trying to find areas that were open but had no luck. We finally called it a day and headed for the hotel. We spent the rest of the day hanging out

and sitting in the hot tub, planning for tomorrow. It snowed all day. We decided Triston and I would go to a new location. Dad would drop Carter off so he could make it back to the location he saw the bull a couple of days prior. Dad would work in a new area. Unfortunately, It snowed and blew all night.

Wednesday morning the snow had let up some but was still coming down lightly, plus the fog was moving in and out. The area Triston and I went to gave us some breaks throughout the day. We found some bulls but nothing we wanted to go after. Carter was not able to make it to his assigned area as the wind drifted all the roads closed and was not even passable with the four-wheeler. So, he rejoined Dad. They had fog in and out all day but toward dark they found a bull dad wanted Triston and me to look at so we hurried over to them. After looking at him, Triston and Carter thought we could find a better bull. We also decided, because it was

tough getting around in the vehicles, maybe we should push into a burn on foot in the area Carter saw the one he thought looked good.

Thursday morning started out with a good feeling; the weather had broken so getting a chance to glass was exciting. It had put down a lot of snow the last few days. We were getting down on days to hunt as vacation times coming to an end. We made it to the trailhead and began on foot. The first two miles we were on the trail it was really pretty good. Then it went to very overgrown brush, plus downfall everywhere. We were all looking for better ways to get through it. Triston and I pushed through to a huge rock wall. We waited there for Dad and Carter to join us. We were probably a half mile away from the

canyon that provided access to a burned area. We were going through a flat bottom with broken cedar trees. When we came upon a big elk track that made been that morning. I got ready just in case this elk stepped out. We went about 50 yards and I heard a crash in the trees. When I looked in that direction, I saw a flash of a horn. Everything was happening fast and the bull pops out on a little bluff. Dad and Carter said it's a pretty good bull. I am trying to get my gloves and pack off in a hurry, drop to one knee and pulled up to shoot as he stopped on this little bluff. The only problem was I had the scope power too high and was having a hard time finding him in the scope. Triston quickly adjusted the power of scope and I was able to find him as he was crested over the bluff. I did, however, get a shot at him. We were sure I connected on that shot, as he stopped. I was able to get one more shot before he went out of sight, but I missed this time. I reloaded as Triston and I ran up the canyon bottom trying to see if we could get another shot at him. We discovered blood and were trying to figure out where he went. Triston told me to stay with the blood while he was checking things out. I looked up to my left and the bull was about 30 yards away, behind a tree. I was able to quickly get a better angle and finish him off. The four of us got to enjoy some fun photo sessions and prepped the bull to be packed off the mountain. We made it out to the trucks in good time and were able to get headed home with a nice bull for our efforts.

This hunt taught me a lot in so many ways, plus I got to hunt with the best hunters I know on this once-in-a-lifetime hunt; that was something very special! I couldn't have done it without the team that shared this hunt with me. It will definitely be a hunt I will always remember. Someday I will get to tell this story to my kids and share this experience. No matter how lucky, or unlucky you feel, remember, someone has got to draw!



Alaska Guide Service

207-270-1256

alaskaguideservice@gmail.com

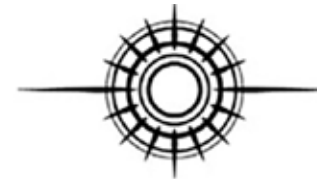
FOR THE HUNT OF A LIFETIME...
COME SHARE ALASKA WITH US!

FAIR CHASE...
BACKPACK HUNTING...
BEST HUNTING ON EARTH!



Let's go huntin'

<https://www.akguideservice.com>



FAMILI WINE



GLOBAL + rescue

WEAR YOUR PASSION FOR YOUR
SPORT - CLUB - TROPHY - SPECIAL OCCASION



J. W. PITTARD LTD.

CUSTOM SCRIMSHAW



24K GOLD CLAD & SCRIMSHAW ACCESSORIES FOR MEN + WOMEN



IMPERIAL TAXIDERM^Y

Follow Us On
 *Instagram*
 @IMPERIALTAXIDERM^Y



121 HANNIBAL STREET-CALDWELL, ID -208-454-9390
WWW.IMPERIALTAXIDERM^Y.COM

LEGACY
SPORTS
INTERNATIONAL[®]



DIGGING DEEP

BY SCOTT GAHRINGER

As I write this story it is still surreal how it all played out. It all started in 2018 when a good friend Jeremy Tripp invited me to the Reno Sheep Show. Shortly after, he went on his first sheep hunt, and after hearing his story of the highs and lows of sheep hunting the thought of me going on a sheep hunt started to manifest itself, but to be honest I have always thought that sheep hunting was out of reach unless I was able to draw a tag in one of the states I apply for. 2022, like every year my friends and I made plans to head to Reno to escape the reality of the long north Idaho winter. Unaware that this yearly escape would lead me to the REAL desert chasing big horn sheep. I rolled the dice, as usual and purchased a couple raffle tickets from the Idaho Wild Sheep booth for a Desert Sheep hunt. I'm not the luckiest person in the room but I am an optimist. I always imagined what it would be like if my name was the one drawn out of the hat! Would I jump up and down? Dance on the table? Cry? Or all the above?

Fast forward a few months, and this question was answered! I was sitting in the Spokane airport getting ready to head to work for the week. As I sat there enjoying the last sip of a beer, my phone rang and on the line was Bill London, president of the Idaho Wild Sheep foundation. The words that followed were unbelievable! Bill said "You are the proud winner of the Desert Sheep hunt give away" as you can probably guess I was more than speechless; I heard the words but was not able to process what was being said. I'm sure causing a long uncomfortable silence on the phone for Bill. Did I actually win? Is this some kind of joke? I thought some friends of mine had to be behind this, it was a joke and they somehow got Bill involved. I hung up the phone, still not exactly sure what had just transpired. I immediately made calls to do a little fishing as to who put this elaborate joke into motion. After calling friends who were at the banquet, I realized that this was no joke!! I immediately called Bill back with the excitement you would expect from a guy going on a desert sheep hunt!!

In the following months plans were made and dates were set. I was going to Sonora Mexico March 6th, 2023, to chase a dream I always thought was unreachable. I was lucky enough to be hunting with Hugo Loera with HR Big Game Outfitters and his "family" of guides, drivers, cooks, and helpers. Months passed and the anticipation grew. Hugo was great at

keeping me informed and letting me know what to expect. He sent lots of hunt pictures; those really kept me excited. I talked Jeremy into joining me in this adventure. As March 6th grew closer my jitters were growing, and the reality started to sink in! I kept running different scenarios that I may encounter through my head like a dog chasing its tail. Will the weather hold? How will it be getting my rifle across the border? Will my flights be delayed? What's the terrain going to be like? The list goes on!!

On March 5th we started the journey to Hermosillo, leaving Spokane WA, and headed to Phoenix AZ. Once we landed in Phoenix Jeremy and I grabbed some dinner and got settled into the hotel for the night. I had a hell of a time sleeping that night as my mind was all over the place with anticipation of what the next few days will hold, so I tossed and turned all night. Little did I know that Jeremy was doing the same thing but for WAY different reasons, he had come down with food poisoning. As dawn drew near, we had a tough decision to make, whether he was going to continue on the adventure laid out in front of us. After a long morning and thoroughly discussing the pros, and cons, we both decided that it would be best for me to continue alone. As I said I'm not the luckiest person around but I'm good at keeping an optimistic outlook so I boarded the plane headed for Hermosillo with the highest of hopes that Jeremy would recover, and this little hiccup would be the last in my journey.

The Plane landed in Hermosillo on time and after making it through customs and the firearm check I walked out of the airport to meet Hugo. The plan was to head out to his ranch just outside of Hermosillo, eat a good dinner and get ready for the long drive the next day to sheep camp. I didn't get much sleep that night either and woke up ready to take on the next step of this adventure, granted it was not a glamorous step, but the long drive was a great way to get to know Hugo; to understand him and how he operates. We showed up at sheep camp late that afternoon and were greeted by the first of many that make up Hugo's first-class team. I was introduced to Poncho, a driver, and Laura the camp cook. Then I got my gear unpacked and re-packed for tomorrow's hunt. We had just enough daylight left to fling a little lead down range to verify my gun was all good after the long journey. As usual, my rifle did its job and put three in the 10X, after that and a little dinner it was bedtime. I felt like a

2023 SONORA, MEXICO
DESERT SHEEP HUNT

*The rest of the day I tried to dig myself out of the hole that I was in,
but just couldn't put the shovel down!*

kid on Christmas eve and barely slept all night. The next morning Hugo, Poncho, and I where up before the sun to head out and meet the rest of the HR family.

We got out to their camp right at dawn and met Rene the main sheep guide, along with Victor, Chino, and Armon-do. After the introductions we began glassing the entire range.

After a couple hours of glassing, we decided it would be best to hike up and over the mountain to take a look at the other side. I learned quickly that most things in the Sonoran Desert want to make you bleed. I left my fair share of flesh on the desert rocks that morning. About an hour after we left our main glassing site we were cresting over to the other side of the mountain. It didn't take long for the temperature to climb and it left all of us drenched with sweat. Once we hit the saddle, Chino, the youngest of the bunch spotted a band of rams on the desert floor. Rene and I made our move down the mountain to get a closer look. We hit the flat and started to look for a higher vantage point to shoot from. We found a rock to climb up getting above the brush. It didn't take long to pick out the band of rams along with a few ewes and the shooter we were looking for. Rene and I sat and watched these sheep 300 yards away feeding towards the base of the mountain for an hour and I was never presented a clean shot. Every time the shooter ram would step out there was another ram, ewe, or brush in the way.

Frustration and anticipation were growing, how could I have a shooter ram at only 300 yards for over an hour with no shot? You would think that this is where the story ends and we all high-five, but this is

nothing but a bump in the adventure of a lifetime. After the agonizing hour on that rock the sheep finally fed out of sight around a rock point. Ten minutes later Renee spotted the rams without the ewes about 500 yards away already working their way back up the mountain. I swung my rifle around and started making my shooting perch to get settled in, Renee was reading the yardage to me 500, 505, 510 ... the sheep kept climbing. I got the ram in my scope and felt rock solid in my rest. Renee asked me if I was ready and I was, he then replied "shoot". It felt like forever for the trigger to break when it did I lost the ram in my scope but the shot felt and sounded good. That feeling was short lived after Renee said "miss" the feeling that followed that word was indescribable as it was a whole bunch of feelings hitting me in a split second! I was in a tailspin now, I asked Renee "was I high or low" I already figured I was low, so I got back on the ram held half minute higher and let another round fly, the next thing I heard was crushing "miss". At that time, I was done, I had no idea what was wrong. Did I read the range wrong? Was my scope off? Or was it sheep fever?

This was the lowest, most defeated I've felt in a very long time while hunting. The walk back to camp felt like an eternity. All of the guys were trying to cheer me up, but nothing was getting through my thick head. All I could think about was that was my only chance and I failed! I had just blown the biggest hunting opportunity that has ever been put in front of me. I was gifted a hunt of a lifetime and blew it, ole' lucky failed and that was my chance at a trophy of a lifetime. The rest of the day I tried to dig myself out of the hole that I was in, but just couldn't put the shovel down! Thankfully I was with a great bunch of guys, and they got me out of my pity party, put a smile on my face and had me excited again for the next day's opportunity.

The alarm, aka the rooster, went off a little late the next morning and we headed back out to the mountain that humbled me the prior day. We spent the day hiking and glassing but failed to turn any "good" rams so day 2 came and left with the sun.

The next day started the same, we woke up, got packed up, ate a wonderful breakfast made by Laura and loaded up in the truck to meet the mountain at sunup. Once Hugo, Poncho and I made it out to our glassing spot, Rene and the boys had a couple of rams spotted that warranted a closer look. As we walked along the desert floor to get a better look at the rams, the memory of Day One was hard to shake. We made it to a good glassing spot and quickly turned up the rams. We watched the two mature rams for 30 minutes and that's when Rene told me that neither ram was a shooter.

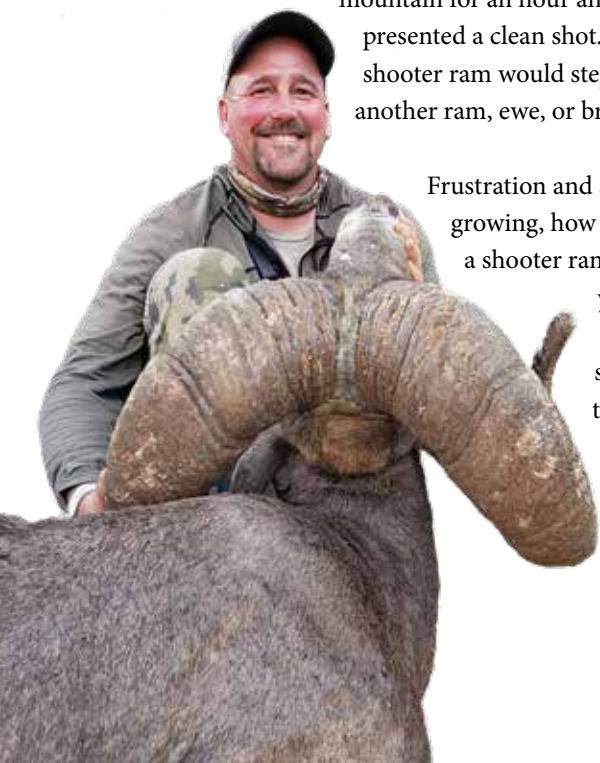
At this point I think the plan was to head back to our original glassing spot, but my gut, or hard head, (hard to tell which one) told me we need to spend the day hiking along the base of the mountain and glassing all the little hiding spots we couldn't see from a distance. It didn't take much convincing on my part to get Rene to agree to spend the day hiking as I found out later that sheep hunting is his favorite. Fast forward 5 hours and add a 50-degree temperature increase, we sat looking at a small ram and ewe about 800 yards away on a razor back ridge. Rene, Chino and I had just finished a little snack and a drink of water as we discussed our next move for the afternoon. It was getting late, and the temps were high. We decided to pack up and start heading back towards camp, as quickly as we made that decision, the words "Good Ram" from Rene instantly changed our decision.

Rene had spotted a shooter to our left about 650 yards up the mountain. The excitement from Day One was back!! We all swung our spotters to take a look at the ram and quickly realized his size was unmistakable, it was the biggest ram we have seen so far. Rene and I talked it over and decided that it would be best to close the distance and try to get on a rock uprising about 150 yards way. We crawled our way along the rocks and up a little chute until we couldn't get any closer without exposing ourselves. The rocks we picked made a perfect shooting platform and I settled in for the shot. Rene was in his binos as I was getting all the scope adjustments made to make the shot. Rene was calling out the yardage 480, 460, 450, then he stopped and asked if I was ready, without hesitation I said, "yep let me know when you're ready" what felt like forever I finally heard, "shoot". My mind was clear, and as the trigger broke the recoil pushed me off my rest. When I regained my sight picture the ram was gone!! Instant panic hit me as I thought I missed again, but it all felt so good? My doubts were

drowned out by Rene's celebratory whoops and hollers "yah he's down, down"!! We high-fived and hugged as the whole gamut of emotions engulfed me. I had finally done it! As we approached the spot where the ram was supposed to be lying, we soon realized that he had tumbled down a chute out of sight. It took us 45 minutes to find where he had come to rest. It was not a good spot. The ram was caught in some brush in a nearly vertical crevasse with a 15' cliff below him. The only way to get to the ram was going to be with some rope and lower someone down to get him. Chino drew the short straw due to the fact he was the lightest and probably the bravest. He didn't even bat an eye when we came up with this plan. A few minutes later he was at the ram and shortly after, the ram was lowered down to the next flat bench below. The relief I felt the moment I was finally able to put my hands on this rams' horns is still hard to put into words.


To say that this hunt has changed me is an understatement. I had no idea how dramatically this experience would change me, and I'm still not sure I comprehend its full effect. In a matter of seven days, I managed to go from the excitement of what Day One was going to hold to the lowest of lows and humbleness and back to the pinnacle of achievement and excitement. I can't put into words what is like to put a "Good" ram in the crosshairs. God willing maybe I will on the next one!

I must give thanks to Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation and the entire crew at HR Big Game Outfitters for the experience that will not be forgotten. Without this partnership I would not have been able to experience such an amazing hunt! I would like to give special thanks to Bill London for not hanging up on me when I thought his call was a prank!! Hugo Loera and his family of guides and helpers for picking me back up after an epic failure. Rene, Chino, Victor, Armando, Laura, and Poncho, Thank you all!!



 Hugo Loera



 hugo_loera_arce



• Hermosillo, Sonora, México • 011 521(662) 148 2595 •
• hrbiggameoutfitter@gmail.com •

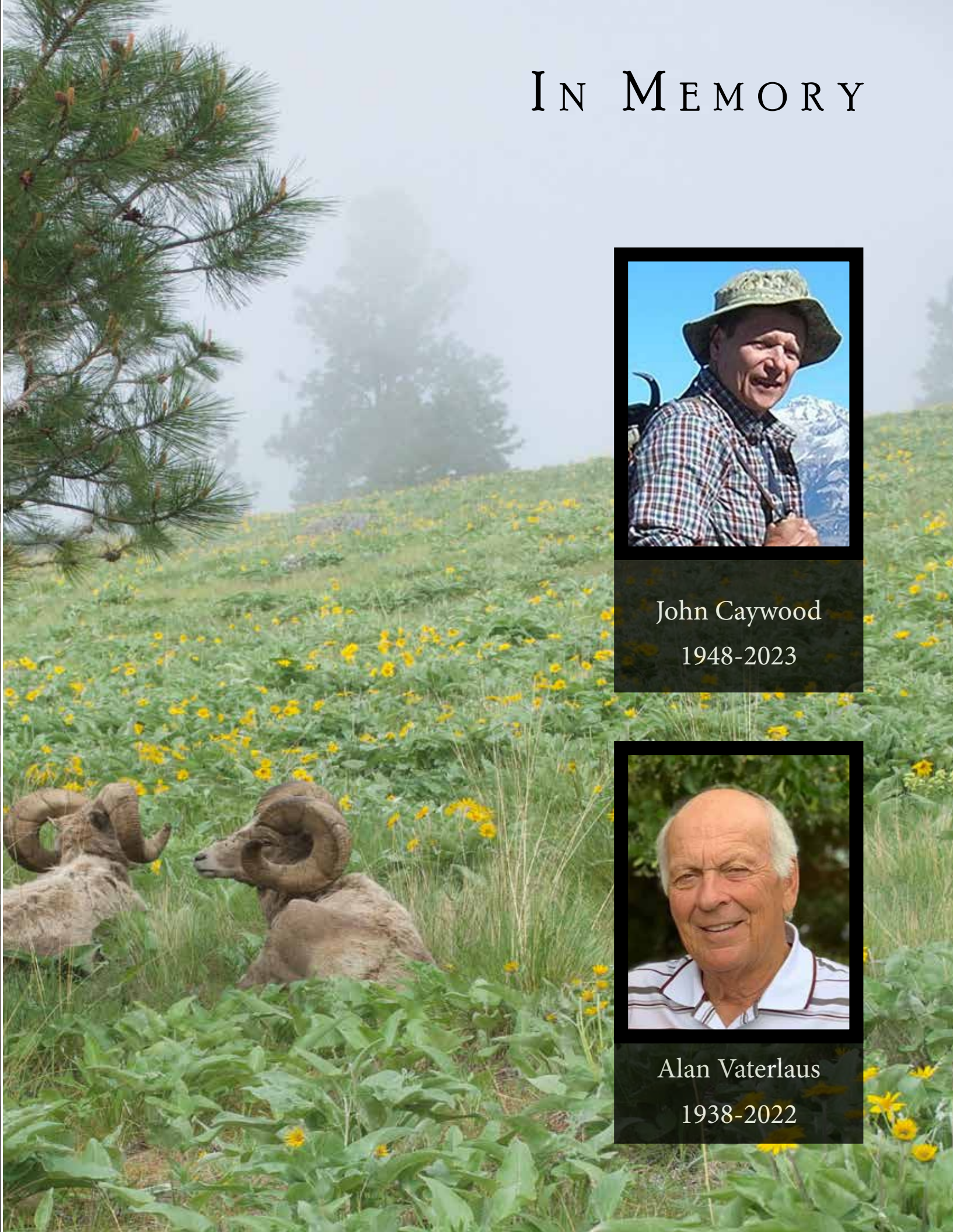
IN MEMORY



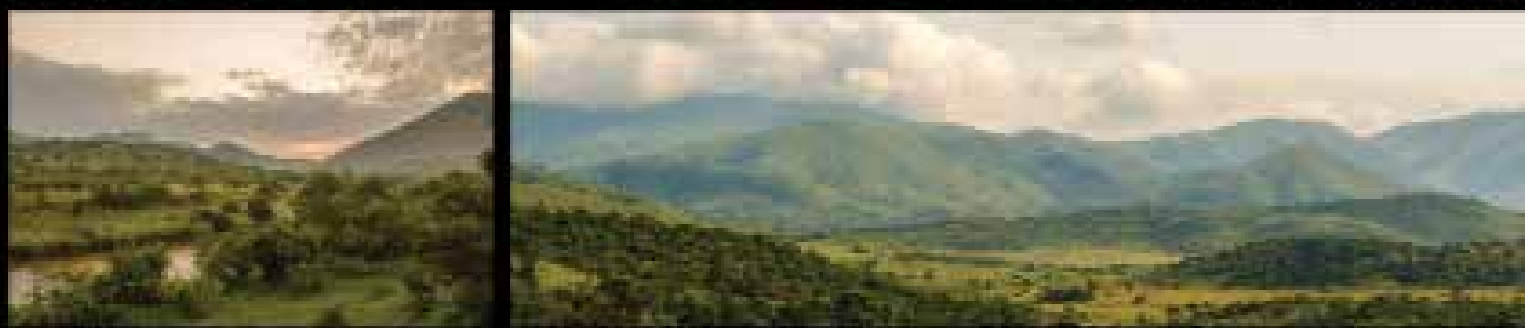
John Caywood
1948-2023



Alan Vaterlaus
1938-2022



Graham Sales
SAFARIS
 MIND AND HEART OPEN TO NATURE



Graham Sales – PHASA Professional Hunter of the year 2018
 – PHASA "Uncle Stevie" Award: Winner 2004 & 2007
 (acknowledgement of excellent trophy quality)

Exclusive hunting rights to:
 Sangimvelo Nature Reserve – South Africa's largest Provincial Nature Reserve
 Timbavati & Klaserie Private Nature Reserves in South Africa
 Marangira (Niassa) – Northern Mozambique

www.grahamsalessafaris.com



Batteries
+ Bulbs



NEED HELP ACHIEVING YOUR SUPER TEN?



IT'S EASY TO JOIN AT WWW.SLAMQUEST.ORG

To be eligible, members **MUST BE IN PURSUIT** of their SUPER TEN and have **NOT** completed it. Simply join GSCO and also purchase a \$25 GSCO "My 10" Membership.

YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN at the 2024 GSCO Convention (exact time & location TBA).

EACH "My 10" Member will receive only **ONE** ticket in the "MY 10" MEMBERSHIP DRAWING. The winner who is drawn gets **THEIR CHOICE OF HUNT** from their remaining hunts **NEEDED** on their documented SUPER TEN! Need a sheep? Need a moose? **YOU DECIDE!**

Winning does **NOT** kick you out as long as you remain a member and your SUPER TEN has not been completed.

NEED NOT BE PRESENT BONUS DRAWINGS for SUPER TEN hunts and gear. The first drawing is for a **MUSKOX** hunt with **Gary Adams** of **Canadian High Arctic Adventures**. The drawing takes place as soon as 500 "My 10" members sign up. The first 500 "My 10" Members of 2023 will also receive a **20% discount** at KUIU. So, join today!



Laser Engraving Solutions

PROVIDING CUSTOMERS WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF LASER ENGRAVING NEEDS

- Custom Cups
- Wood Plaques
- Much More!

Family Owned

Family Operated



1 w 490 n Blackfoot, ID 83221

Phone - 208-681-6566



Email - laserengravingsolutions@gmail.com

MEMBER

PICTURES



SUBMIT TO:
info@idahowildsheep.org



WANTED



- HUNTING STORIES
- PICTURES—LIVE, TROPHY, SCENERY, SWAG, ETC.
- HUNTING TIPS
- WILD GAME RECIPES

The story chosen for the cover will receive a KRYPTTEK Altitude Bora vest donated by KRYPTTEK with embroidered Idaho WSF logo. Journal submittals and cover contest is open to all members. Not a member? Join now at www.idahowildsheep.org

TIPS:

- Set your phone/camera to HIGH QUALITY
- Cover photo pictures must be portrait (vertical) orientation
- Be creative! Cover photo's do not have to be trophy shots.
- Include pictures of your experience, friends, scenery, camp, etc.

DEADLINES:

Winter issue: October 31st

Summer issue: April 30th

Thank you



SWAG

SALE
\$10

DOWN WITH THE SICKNESS
T-SHIRT



T-shirts—SALE

NEW Shield Logo t-shirts

NEW Logo Hoodies

Mugs

Stickers

Life member vests

Centennial member jackets

Logo vests



Shop online at www.idahowildsheep.org



CONSERVATION PARTNER BENEFITS

OUR REACH

- 900+ Members
- 9,000+ on Social Media
- 1,300 Magazine subscribers
- 1,800 Email subscribers
- 850+ In attendance at our Annual Banquet

Banquet donor's receive the following recognition:

- At the event sponsored
- Printed program
- Event slideshow
- Printed magazine advertisement based on level (below)

Donation receipt to 501c(3) for tax purposes.

Listed on our website Conservation Partner directory for 3 years.

LEVELS—

LAMB CONSERVATION PARTNER \$100
 EWE CONSERVATION PARTNER \$250
 Logo in two issues of the Idaho WSF magazine.

1/4 CURL CONSERVATION PARTNER \$500
 ¼ page add in two issues of the Idaho WSF magazine.

1/2 CURL CONSERVATION PARTNER \$1,000
 ½ page add in two issues of the Idaho WSF magazine.

3/4 CURL CONSERVATION PARTNER \$2,500
 Full-page ad in two issues of the Idaho WSF magazine.

FULL CURL CONSERVATION PARTNER
 \$5,000+ CASH SPONSORSHIP
 \$10,000+ MERCHANDISE/VALUE SPONSORSHIP
 (2) Full page ads or, a two-page spread in two issues of the Idaho WSF magazine.

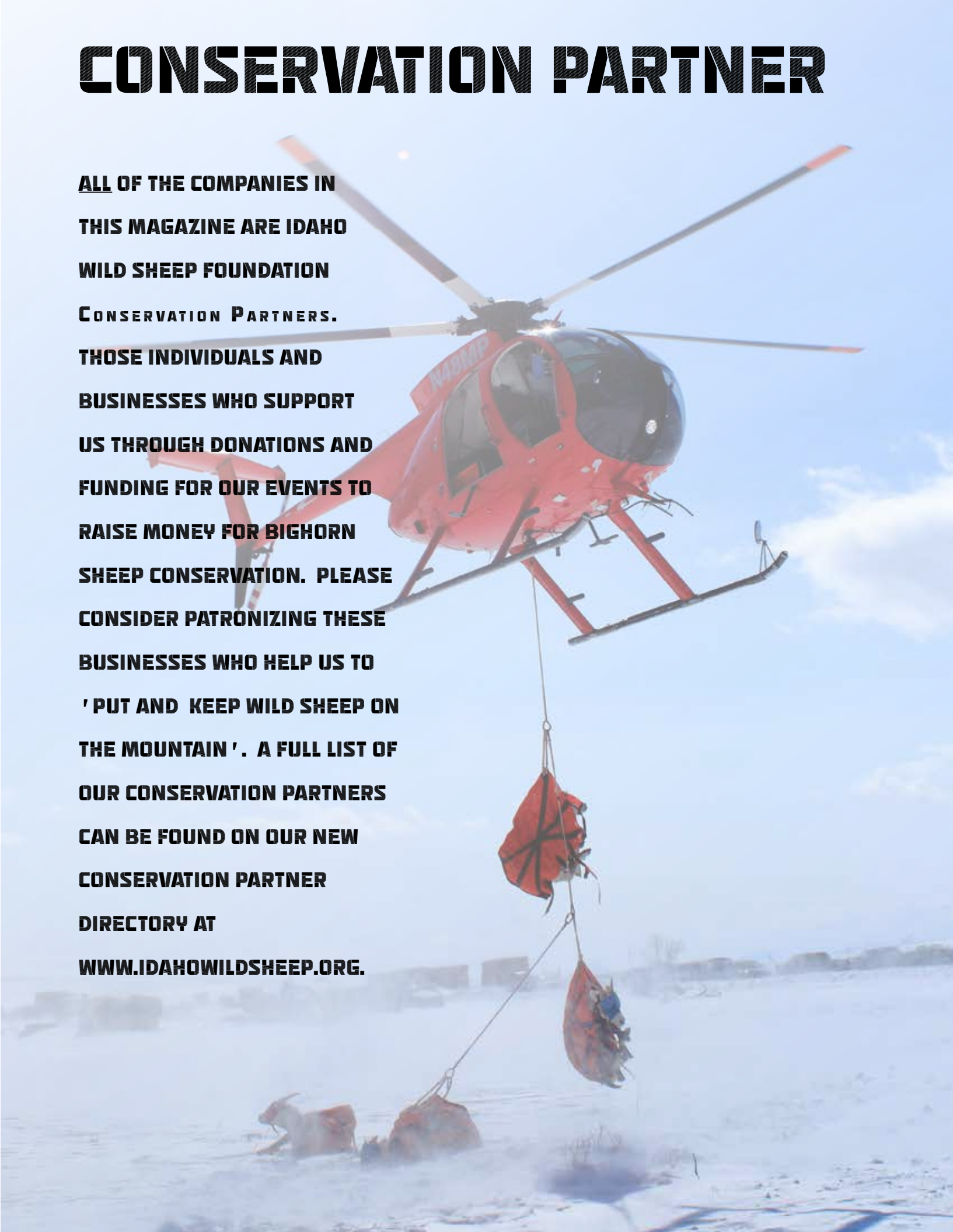
Levels listed are based on cash or, value of donation. Donations of any size are accepted, nothing is too small.

Contact the office at 208-345-6171 or, email info@idahowildsheep.org for more detail or to speak with a board member. .



CONSERVATION PARTNER

ALL OF THE COMPANIES IN THIS MAGAZINE ARE IDAHO WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION CONSERVATION PARTNERS. THOSE INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES WHO SUPPORT US THROUGH DONATIONS AND FUNDING FOR OUR EVENTS TO RAISE MONEY FOR BIGHORN SHEEP CONSERVATION. PLEASE CONSIDER PATRONIZING THESE BUSINESSES WHO HELP US TO ' PUT AND KEEP WILD SHEEP ON THE MOUNTAIN ' . A FULL LIST OF OUR CONSERVATION PARTNERS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR NEW CONSERVATION PARTNER DIRECTORY AT WWW.IDAHOWILDSHEEP.ORG.



Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation
P.O. Box 8224
Boise, Idaho 83707

