



NATIONAL BIGHORN SHEEP CENTER



Fall 2024

Volume 1, Issue 1



It is my honor to step in as the new Executive Director for the National Bighorn Sheep Center. As a local who had the pleasure to live in the Torrey Valley for 15 years, I am grateful to work for such a prominent conservation organization and museum. My lifetime experiences have focused around wildlife and wild places that is what drew me to the Wind River Mountains and the Sheep Center.

As we wrap up our summer season it is a good time to reflect on the last year and the impact that we had on others. We have doubled our outreach numbers to more than 40,000 in the last years. Camp

Bighorn was held in July during our annual birthday celebration and the 4th of July holiday weekend. We had a record number of campers this year - 31 kids from 9 different states with 5 attending from a group home on the Wind River Indian Reservation. It was an outstanding experience. On our 31st anniversary we celebrated with nearly 200 guests, partner vendors, raffles and more. Proceeds supported the Dubois US 26 Wildlife Crossing Project named *The Wind River to Grand Tetons – Connecting Wildlife on the Togwotee Trail*. This project has risen to the top wildlife crossing project for both the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

Conservation education is the single most important thing that we can do to keep our wild spaces. It takes a collaboration of organizations, resources, and donors to make this happen. A vital tool for enhancing public understanding and appreciation of wildlife management, conservation education must be at the forefront of our conversations. As a parent of two, I feel strongly that it is our youth that will control what happens to our cultural resources. Our strategic plan focuses on these goals and keeps us driven.

Sincerely,

Amanda Verheul

BOARD LIST

Al Gehrt

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Steve Kilpatrick

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Ryan Brock

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Bryan Sage

"In the end, we conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught."

— **Baba Dioum, Senegalese poet**

By the Numbers 9/23-9/24



Photo credit: Linda Gordan

Inspire | Educate | Conserve

40,000

Total Outreach

359

Members

5,911

Museum Guests

26

School Groups
3,088 students

54

Ecotour participants

31

Campers, 9 states

“Keep close to Nature’s heart... and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean.” –John Muir

\$46,900

Raised from the 2024 Wyoming
Game & Fish Commissioner's Tag
provided by Richard Ladwig

\$99,094

In donations

\$96,485

In the Conservation
Education
Endowment Fund

*Providing education and outreach for the national
conservation of wild sheep, wildlife, and wild lands...*

STAFF LIST

Amanda Verheul

*Executive
Director*

Anna Miller

*Museum
Coordinator*

Anna Mabie

*Marketing/Brand
Coordinator*

Jenny Bautz

*Summer
Intern*

Beth Cable

*Education
Manager*

NEW AT THE CENTER

ANNA MILLER | MUSEUM COORDINATOR | NATIONAL BIGHORN SHEEP CENTER

The National Bighorn Sheep Center added to the museum an exciting new insect exhibit in March 2024. The exhibit is composed of 48 specimens, including the white-lined sphinx moth, the Weidemeyer's Admiral, and the monarch butterfly. The white-lined sphinx moth has an extremely broad range and can travel farther than many other pollinators which increases genetic diversity in the plants it pollinates. Monarch butterflies have one of the largest migrations and while they migrate, they pollinate a wide range of wildflowers while feeding on nectar. The Weidemeyer's admiral is another pollinator that resides in coniferous forests and pollinates a number of flowers and forbs that our sheep rely on.



Insects are vital in the ecosystem and provide pollination for grasses and forbs that our wildlife feed on. The new exhibit adds another step in the ecology of wild sheep and the many organisms they interact with. These specimens have been at the Center since the beginning and we originally had 188 insects. Many of the insects were collected in the Torrey Valley back in the 1980's and have been stored in boxes ever since.

Identifying each specimen proved very challenging for my knowledge and I reached out to an entomologist at the University of Wyoming to assist in identifying many of the insects. He quickly noticed we had carpet beetle exoskeletons within the boxes and recommended they go into a deep freezer for a few days to take care of any other carpet beetles. Into the deep freezer they went for seven days. Once they were carpet beetle free, I made the decision to keep a limited number of specimens to display. The rest were donated to the Lander Region of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department for education and display. The case was built by Al Gehrt and I arranged the insects and made the tags with both scientific and common names.



Camp Bighorn

A Letter from Camp Bighorn Coordinator, Kray Lutz



Camp Bighorn 2024 was a testament to the power of immersive, hands-on learning. Throughout the week, campers participated in a variety of activities that enriched their understanding of both the natural world and the significance of their environment. Highlights included field journaling, archery, atlatl, and large carnivore awareness sessions. They explored the art of taxidermy, delved into the evolution of weaponry, and enjoyed learning to build survival shelters. The camp's focus on understanding Torrey Valley underscored its importance in the management and conservation of the Bighorn Sheep that call it home. Through activities like petroglyph exploration, edible and medicinal plant exploration, and a hike to Torrey Rim Falls, campers gained a deeper appreciation for the delicate balance of this ecosystem. The kayaking and canoeing sessions, fly and spin fishing, and fish hatchery tour further connected campers with the valley's vital resources. Special events included a birthday at the Sheep Center, participation in the Dubois Town 4th of July Parade, and exploration of native history. The week concluded with insights into water ecology, backpacking 101, survival bracelet crafting, and a beach day. These experiences collectively highlighted the importance of Torrey Valley's role in sustaining the Bighorn Sheep population and reinforced the campers' understanding of conservation efforts. Campers left with new skills, expanded knowledge, and a profound appreciation for the natural world and its management. The blend of educational activities, adventurous experiences, and community engagement made for a truly enriching and all around amazing week. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the dedicated instructors, volunteers, and families who made this camp a resounding success. Here's to another year of unforgettable adventures and learning at Whiskey Mountain Conservation Camp!

Photo Credits: Marketing and Brand Coordinator Anna Mabie



New Study Shows Indirect Impacts of Disease on Wyoming's Bighorn Sheep

KATIE CHEESBROUGH | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | WY WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION

We are excited to share the outcome of years of cooperatively funded bighorn sheep research from the Monteith Lab at the University of Wyoming. Doctoral student Rachel Smiley published her six-year study on infection-nutrition feedbacks in bighorn sheep in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B this past month. A PDF of the full study can be found on the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation Website in our references tab. Here's a brief summary of this excellent research.

As bighorn sheep enthusiasts, you are likely familiar with the direct effects of respiratory disease in bighorn sheep, resulting in devastating all-age pneumonia die-offs. However, this study looks at these pathogens' indirect effects when they persist in a herd. After initial pneumonia outbreaks, the pathogens can remain in the herd in individuals who don't show typical clinical signs of disease. The pathogens become endemic (or enzootic) to the herd through these individual carriers, impacting the population through low body condition, lower lambing rates, and poor lamb recruitment, sometimes for years after the outbreak.

Worse, the consequences of carrying the pathogen can be exacerbated if bighorn sheep are nutritionally stressed due to a harsh winter, displacement from ideal habitats, or low-quality forage. This could negatively affect the herd's demographics and contribute to increased infection rates or subsequent disease outbreaks. However, the complex interplay between nutrition, disease, and the resulting indirect effects has been difficult to disentangle. Rachel's study describes the impacts persistent pathogens have on bighorn sheep in the Greater Yellowstone Area of Wyoming.

The study began in March 2015, and data collection was completed in March 2021 on three bighorn sheep herds within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem: the Whiskey Mountain herd, the Jackson herd, and the Upper Shoshone population in the Absaroka Range. Four different bacterial pathogens associated with pneumonia had been identified in all three herds prior to and during the study, including *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (*M. Ovi*). *The study design included capturing adult (4+ years old) ewes every March and December. At each capture, the researchers estimated body fat, gave each animal a body condition score, determined lactation status, estimated age (via horns and teeth), and took nasal and tonsil swabs to determine pathogen presence. The swabs were sent for diagnostic testing at the Wyoming Game and Fish Department Wildlife Health Laboratory, where the presence of bacterial species in the samples was determined.*



Bighorn Sheep Study, Whiskey Mountain (continued)

During the six years of the study, 128 individuals were caught in 470 total captures, resulting in an enormous amount of data. During their analysis, Rachel and her team found that the amount of fat a sheep carried influenced its ability to clear pathogens (specifically *M. Ovi*). They also determined that infection with respiratory pathogens decreased fat reserves. The cost of infection to fat reserves was close to and sometimes surpassed the cost of raising a lamb. Fat reserves also influenced the probability of clearing pathogens, pregnancy, and over-winter survival. To put it into simpler terms, Rachel states that a bighorn ewe “could survive for up to 23 days on the amount of fat that was lost to high levels of infection.” With this in mind, it’s clear that persistent pathogen infection creates an energetic burden that amplifies the tradeoffs between survival and reproduction. When animals use all of their available energy to survive, they have lower pregnancy rates, and if they manage to give birth, they may not be able to raise healthy lambs. Thus, the indirect consequences of persistent pathogens have long-term implications for population dynamics, especially when nutritional resources are lacking or unavailable.

So, what do we do with this information? We already know that respiratory disease in bighorn sheep is terrible in terms of outbreaks and mortality. Now we understand that even when we aren’t having mass die-offs, persistent pathogen loads can have major long-term impacts on the ability of populations to rebound due to energetic stress. Outside of finding a silver bullet to eliminate these pathogens or throwing up our hands in despair, our best bet is thoughtful habitat and population management.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department continues working with the Monteith lab and their findings to develop appropriate strategies to manage bighorn sheep in a disease landscape. This includes identifying where to increase nutritional quantity and quality within bighorn sheep habitats and implementing effective

habitat enhancements. Sometimes, this means looking at the limits of the available habitat and managing populations to a level commensurate with that habitat. In the case of the Jackson herd, this has resulted in the implementation of ewe hunts from time to time to maintain the population at a sustainable level of 400-500 animals. For the Whiskey herd, Wyoming Game and Fish Managers are implementing test and remove strategies to remove chronic carriers of *M. Ovi* from the population to increase lamb recruitment.

We are grateful to our cutting-edge researchers, our open-minded wildlife managers, and our generous funding partners for continuing to work together to figure out how we can best put and keep wild sheep on the mountain in Wyoming.



Photo Credit: Bill Sincavage

EDUCATING AND INSPIRING YOUTH

Dr. Ryan Brock PHD | Youth Education Coordinator for WSF

If you are reading this newsletter then I'm pretty certain you already have some sort of vested interest in an aspect of wildlife, the outdoors, or conservation. When we look at the term itself, "conservation" from the standpoint of wildlife conservation or natural conservation, it is quite simply the effort to make sure that concept is around for the next generation to utilize and appreciate. As of 2021, when looking at the demographics of the United States, 22.2% of its inhabitants were under 18 years old. *These youth of America are the first group to benefit from and enjoy the efforts of conservation taking place now. They are also the next group in line to ensure wild places and wild animals are conserved in the future.*

However, fewer and fewer youth are spending time out in nature and among wildlife. Numerous studies over the past few decades have suggested children are spending less time outdoors than their predecessors. In order to appreciate something and want it around, one usually has to have some sort of connection to contextual understanding of why it is important. As children have been spending more time indoors and on electronics, they have been having less time to connect with natural environments. If we want this next generation to continue the efforts of conservation pertaining to wildlife and outdoor spaces, then they need to have opportunities to experience wildlife and the great outdoors.

There is hope. A study by the Outdoor Foundation found that in 2021 that 54% of Americans ages 6 and over participated in outdoor recreation at least once throughout the year. This is the highest number of participants on record since they have been producing the Outdoor Participant Trends Report, in 2007. In fact, the number of recreationalists were pretty stable around 143.8 million each year from 2008-2017 and has been rising steadily each year since, with 165.6 million participating in 2021. Despite increases in the number of participants, total outdoor experiences are declining, and although the number of kids participating in outdoor recreation is up, youth are participating less frequently. This especially applies to youth from 13-17 years old, who had 59.3% of them say their favorite non-outdoor recreation activity was video games.

If this next generation is to truly care at the level that you do about wildlife and/or wild spaces, then it is up to all of us to help provide meaningful learning opportunities and outdoor experiences. When someone has true experiential connectedness to something, they are more likely to care about it one way or the other. Without experiences, it is hard to develop a passion. So how does one go about that? Well, I believe if you have a family and kids of your own in the household, it often just takes the planning of going on a hike, go camping, scout for deer or elk or bighorn, or even birdwatching. My guess is, once again, if you are reading this and have young kids, you are probably already taking efforts to do such things. However, life is busy. I am also a 5th grade teacher and over my twenty-six years of teaching I have seen first-hand how time out of school has changed. My students now seem so much busier outside of school hours with planned sports, programs, and other events than my students did during my first decade teaching.

I see it within my own family. I have a 15-year old and a 12-year old. We have probably decreased the time we spent outdoors hiking, camping, and exploring by well over half then when my kids were younger. When they were younger it was easy for my wife and I to plan weekends away camping and hiking with them. Even after school outdoor adventures were common. Now it seems at least one of them has something going on and we have to actually schedule in our adventures and put the more limited experiences on our calendar to make sure we get those even happening. I do get it...life can be busy. I believe it is important for families to put a few outdoor adventures on the calendar. If it is on a calendar, it is likely to happen. What about those youth with parents who are not into the outdoors? Those are the ones I believe we need to get hooked. Growing up in a family that does outdoor related activities will most likely produce kids who grow up enjoying the outdoors and have a better chance at getting involved in conservation.



[Continued] But kids who don't get to experience camping, watching animals in their own environment, hiking up a beautiful valley, or working hard while on a hunt and then helping packing out the food to feed your family for the next year...these youth will only know nature from limited sources like television and social media. It isn't the same as an experience. These are the kids we need to figure out how to impact and get them outside.

It isn't too difficult. If you know a family who doesn't get outside often, perhaps simply invite them along on your next adventure. Also, don't forget your extended family. If you have nephews, nieces, or grandkids nearby, take them along on your adventures.

Reach out to a local elementary school and offer to volunteer by teaching about one of your passions. We at the Wild Sheep Foundation even have teacher check out kits that we send to schools free of charge, all shipping included. I could send the kit to you and you utilize the hands on items to create an educational experience for the kids. All the schools I've worked at would love for someone to offer to create and organize an outdoor education day. We have one school in northern Nevada that does this and borrows some of the Wild Sheep Foundation's items for it, including out hover archery range. Once again, feel free to reach out to me for ideas or items to help.

For those really ambitious, consider getting involved with or even organizing an outdoor experience for the community. I remember only a few outdoor events for youth when I was a kid that I participated in. However, today most conservation groups put on at least one youth event a year. These can be designed to simply introduce and inspire kids about the outdoors. Communities love these events and often just need someone to start organizing it. Reach out to other outdoor groups in the area where each group simply has a station about something they are passionate about. It can start small and build from there.

The Wild Sheep Foundation believes strongly in our youth, as we even mention them in our mission statement. Since our Shooting, Hunting and Ethics Education Program (S.H.E.E.P.) event in 2012, we have impacted over 121,000 youth in 786 different events. Some of these are annual events that have become traditions in the communities where they occur. Others include our school outreach program with our teacher kits and curriculum and even our Wild Sheep Foundation archery team, that practices twice a month and has produced a few competitive shooters. They have included more recently taking a groups of kids and their parent on overnight hunting experiences. We have teamed up with the Boy Scouts to introduce guzzler builds and even taken some youth on a sheep capture.

A few years ago, the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation and the Wild Sheep Foundation partnered to create the Butch Townsend Youth Conservation Award to recognize a youth in 7th-12th grade who is already involved with wildlife conservation. Applications are due by August 15th each year. If you know a youth who has experience in giving back already, please encourage him or her to apply.

Please take a moment to reflect on the youth in your community and those you have contact within your life. Is there something you could do to further the efforts in making an impact in a young person's life that could help steer them towards a better understanding of the natural world? Maybe you know a teacher who goes above and beyond in these areas. Perhaps take the time to nominate him or her for the Outstanding Bighorn Teacher award that is given by National Bighorn Sheep Center. Motivating a teacher who impacts 30 youth a year can have huge long-term positive consequences over the career of a teacher!

For more information on ideas or loaning programs for items for youth events, the Townsend Youth Conservation Award, or other questions, please reach out to Ryan Brock at Rbrock@wildsheepfoundation.org or scan the QR code.



EST.  2015

WILD HARVEST INITIATIVE®

Creating a world where all people recognize the importance of wildlife and healthy ecosystems to both human wellbeing and the planet; where wildlife and wild places are conserved in perpetuity; where people benefit from their utilization of living, wild resources in a sustainable and ethical way; and where policy and management decisions maximize the benefits that wild resources and ecosystems provide.

A MODERN DISCONNECT

Sustainable use remains a crucial mechanism for wildlife conservation in the United States and Canada. Yet, many people question its value today and also fail to acknowledge that the harvest and consumption of living, wild resources remains critical to the health and well-being, diets, economies, cultures, and livelihoods of billions of people in North America and around the world.

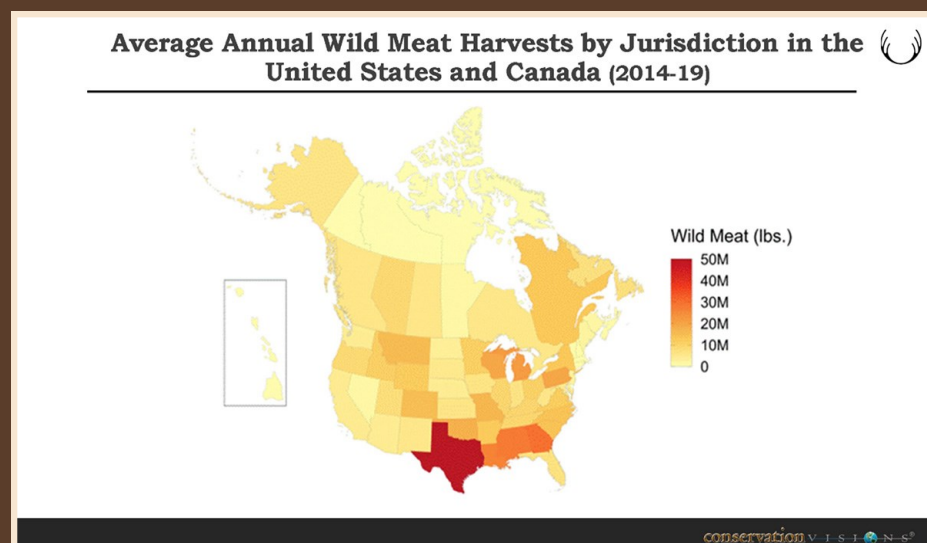
This disconnect is evidenced not just by increasingly negative public attitudes toward wildlife harvesting practices and harvesters, themselves, but by a dramatic decrease in hunter numbers over time and the increasing average age of participants. This is especially troubling since hunters and anglers are a primary financial contributor to wildlife management and conservation efforts in North America.

THE GAME-CHANGER

The Wild Harvest Initiative® is the first serious effort to synthesize and evaluate the combined economic, conservation, and social benefits of recreational wild animal harvests in American and Canadian societies.

How many pounds of locally sourced, naturally produced meat do we get, on average, from a wild harvested white-tailed buck? What about an elk or an antelope? How many pounds come from a limit of mallards, a wild turkey, or a brace of quail? How many healthy meals can be procured from a day spent fishing for trout, bass, or salmon? How much of this food will be shared with friends and family, with people who don't, themselves, hunt or fish? How much will be shared with food pantries and other charitable organizations? How much would it cost to replace this wild food through supermarket purchases? How much wildlife habitat would have to be destroyed and how much fuel, irrigation water, fertilizer, and pesticides would have to be used to replace this wild sustenance? What would the harvesting, processing, and transportation costs be? What is the actual value of hunting and fishing in modern North American society?

The [Wild Harvest Initiative®](http://wildharvestinitiative.com) is finding out. Get involved visit wildharvestinitiative.com



BUILDING BRIDGES BY TENDING TO THE COMMUNAL CAMPFIRE

The Best Part? Everyone is Invited



At **1Campfire**, we are on a mission to make hunting accessible and—above all—accepted as any other outdoor pursuit. In a world that increasingly appreciates organic food, outdoor adventure, and alignment with the natural world, it's perplexing how hunting and fishing have become pariahs, especially in the world of adventure and outdoor sports like hiking, camping, surfing and snowboarding. As outdoorsmen and women, we must be honest about our role in this unfortunate situation. While we've always loved the outdoors, the hunting community has become aligned with politics, almost always

conservative, and an aggressive attitude about rights, firearms, and a combative nature. But at 1Campfire, we know this does not represent us, either overall or as individuals. Hunters can be anyone. And anyone can be a hunter.

We love hunting first and foremost and are changing minds in a multitude of ways. Here is an in-depth breakdown of 1Campfire's mission and how we find success with empathy, curiosity, and a friendly, apolitical approach. It's simple — 1Campfire exists to open conversations between hunters and the rest of the world. Over the past year, we built on past successes to create a stronger, more confident and empathetic brand voice. The people are noticing. We've seen steady, sustainable growth by seeking out curious outdoor-loving adventurers who, although



may not hunt yet, are just like us. The summary is this: getting friendly and social with non-hunters helps hunters make change in the most important places. Let's keep the fire burning.

First, we focus on messaging that is inclusive. When we say "*hunting is for every human*" we mean it: gender, race, political affiliation, and sexual orientation do not come into our conversation, as we consider mentioning them divisive. If you are human, you are invited to the campfire. This viewpoint is meant to challenge the conventions that only white men hunt and only Indigenous Peoples can pursue it with nobility. These viewpoints are simply not true. Every human is welcome. We believe the entire spectrum of humans can join us in celebrating the rewarding qualities of hunting, fishing and foraging. We don't shy away from the big issues and encourage them to ask the big questions. We share our love and views of hunting proudly because we know firsthand the benefits of sourcing your own food while taking part in a lifestyle as old as humanity itself.

Next, we focus on good, healthy food. In a lot of our messaging, we confidently put organic wild game meat on a pedestal and proudly tell our followers how it is better than the supermarket. Whether fishing, foraging, or hunting, we know food found on the ground and in the water is infinitely better than the food mechanically processed or purchased in cellophane. Fresh, healthy, and ethically sourced food is the primary focus, but far from the only reason we strike out into the wilderness.

Science guides us. We let others do opinions. The space that hunting occupies is famously opinionated and divisive in its arguments. And while we understand free speech's importance, we are also comfortable letting the cacophony of voices that exists outside our bubble echo elsewhere. Inside that sphere, we focus on exploring ideas in a positive light. No echo chambers. No arguments.



We are optimistic. We are inviting. We are open minded. We don't engage in name-calling or fighting, whether it's with hunters or non-hunters. If someone disagrees with 1Campfire, we respectfully acknowledge their stance and move on. We don't need to please everyone. We are confident in who we are. If a commenter harasses another, we tell them to settle down. If they don't, we remove them. Respect reigns supreme in both 1Campfire's posts and comment sections.

Holistic, ethical hunting is something to be proud of. As such, we support fair chase and put poachers on blast. We prop up those who are shining examples and we challenge hunters who might be wary of evolving. Finally, we know this: urban populations do not view hunting in a good light but are instrumental when it comes to voting. This means we need to work hard to convince the general populace that what we do is not detrimental to the environment or the community.

Collaboration is key to what we do at 1Campfire, and we are stepping up our efforts to partner with other organizations, influencers, and content creators. We know a rising tide floats all boats. We believe that if hunting wants to create a safer space in communities, we need to lead the way. Therefore, 1Campfire approaches others who we respect to help get the message out: hunting is not evil. Hunting is pure at heart. Most of all, hunting is a natural and human pursuit. If we don't pursue animals to create experiences and sustenance at the core of who we are, then who are we? Short of being a hardcore vegan, we can't understand why people can't agree with this very simple statement. It's up to us to prove it if we seek acceptance.

In 2024, we've partnered with the production company Filter Studios Inc. to produce a web series with a Pacific Northwest youth educator as the host. We are working with other standout hunting personalities and entities like Howl.org, Sue Tidwell, Blood Origins and Rocky Mountain Goat Alliance to elevate and spotlight a united front on how hunting can be more empathetic, more vulnerable, and most importantly—more accessible—to the average human. Across the spectrum, the feedback from these leaders has been overwhelmingly positive and supportive.

In another brand execution, we are strategically inviting key Canadian media members to a few exclusive dinners with celebrity wild game chefs to illuminate the press on how hunting can take fine dining to a unique and delicious higher level. Based in Vancouver and Victoria, B.C., Canada, we expect the events to gain media coverage that places hunting, sport fishing, and foraging in a better light.

In late 2024 and early 2025, 1Campfire will show up in a significant way at outdoor sport and lifestyle tradeshows in the Pacific Northwest to speak directly to campers, hikers, skiers, surfers and snowboarders, among others. The goal is to put human faces to the digital messaging we've created, so that we may be able to open discourse with people on the ground, so to speak. Some of the world incorrectly thinks we are barbaric and bad for the environment. Let's show them we are anything but by tending to a warm fire that invites all to its welcoming edges. For more information visit 1campfire.com.

— Originally Written for the Wild Sheep Foundation Website

National Bighorn Sheep Center

31st Annual Bighorn Bash Fundraiser and Banquet

5:00pm Saturday January 11th 2025

Headwaters Art and Conference Center

20 Stalnaker Street, Dubois, WY

Tickets — \$60 each

(307) 455-3429 — info@bighorn.org



WYOMING
COMMUNITY
BANK

Mike & Donna
Patterson



NATIONAL
BIGHORN
SHEEP
CENTER

2024 Bighorn Bash Big Four Raffle



Whitewater float trip in the
Wind River Canyon and a
membership to onX



Bakcou E-Bike



Traeger 575 Pro
Pellet Grill



Tikka T3x Lite Veil
in 6.5PRC

\$25 each or 5 for \$100

Purchase by calling (307) 455-3429 or visit the Center.

SEPARATE DRAWING FOR EACH ITEM AT BIGHORN BASH SATURDAY, JANUARY 11TH

NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT OUR MISSION

Winner is responsible for shipping/handling costs



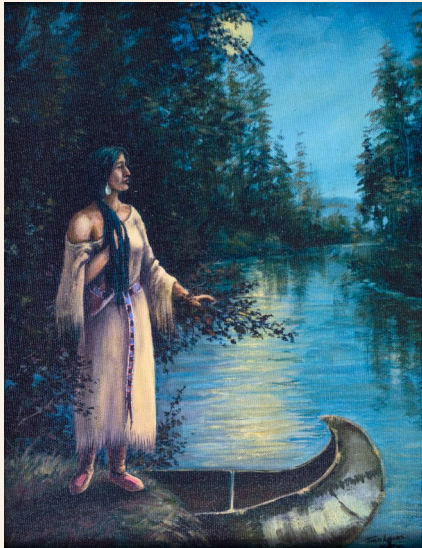
Art
Lawson



Tom Lucas

Wildlands, Wild Life | Seasonal Art Exhibit

Tom's desire to be a western artist stems from his lifestyle as a cowboy, mountain man and outdoorsman. His collection of Native American and Cowboy artifacts as well as his unmatched knowledge of the bighorn sheep bow and ancestral tool making are astonishing. These items and their history are subjects in his still life paintings and the compositions are arranged as if he is telling a story.



INDIAN MAIDEN—
I call her Redwing.
She is standing in
the moonlight
waiting for her man
to come back. He's
been gone for many
days now and she is
concerned for him.
Is he alright? Is he
safe?



BUFFALO — It is spring in the Teton Valley. He is shedding his winter coat and growing his summer coat, enjoying the green grass.



**RED TAIL AND THE
TURTLE —**
To the native people
the red tail hawk is
good medicine, and
the turtle represents
long life, good health
and fertility for the
female. These are
special to her as she
keeps them close by.



LANDSCAPE — This small mountain lake is northwest of Dubois. It makes up but a small portion of our beautiful mountain scenery around here.

OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONIST

Steve Kilpatrick of Dubois, Wyoming was awarded the Wild Sheep Foundation's "Outstanding Conservationist" award at the Sheep Show banquet in Reno, NV on January 18th, 2024. This award is presented for outstanding exemplary and long term contributions to wild sheep conservation and management with a significant impact.

This award was in recognition of Kilpatrick's 45+ year career, working for wild sheep and other wildlife, and the intact habitats they must have. The Wild Sheep Foundation recognizes and salutes Kilpatrick's exceptional, tireless, and lifetime efforts to restore, enhance and conserve bighorn sheep in Wyoming.



"If you don't have habitat you won't have wildlife" said Kilpatrick. He was heavily involved with National Forest planning on domestic sheep grazing and allotment retirements. Kilpatrick worked for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Teton Science School, the Wyoming Wildlife Federation and as Executive Director of the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation. Kilpatrick's focus as a habitat biologist has always been on the foundation for wildlife populations.

Kilpatrick currently serves on the Board of Directors as the Vice President for the National Bighorn Sheep Center to continue his work in wildlife conservation.



Left: Kilpatrick doing leather stamping at the 2023 WY-Wild Sheep Foundation's Banquet with NBSC.



Right: Kilpatrick at our 2019 Bighorn Bash.

LIVING A LEGACY OF CONSERVATION

The National Bighorn Sheep Center Legacy Society aims to preserve your legacy: a life dedicated to the conservation of wild sheep, wildlife, and wildlands today and in the future. When you commit to the National Bighorn Sheep Center in your estate plan, we honor your contribution, your story, and your values by bringing conservation education to the public and to our youths, the next generation of conservationists.

The Wyoming Community Foundation has just announced the 5 to Thrive initiative! When you leave just 5% of your assets to your nonprofit of choice. We can teach, encourage, and inspire future generations to give back and it starts with you — it starts with 5%.

The National Bighorn Sheep Center Legacy Society will help you carry your commitment to conservation far into the future.

LEGACY MEMBERS

Meredith & Tory Taylor (2022)

Mary Turney & Rick Lique (2022)

Brent Pasquinelli (July 2023)

William Alcorn (July 2023)

Dennis B. Appleton (August 2023)

PAINTED HILLS UPDATE

AL GEHRT (DUBOIS, WY) — The Center's previous newsletter included a discussion of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's (Department) activities regarding investigations of the health and status of the sub herd of bighorn sheep frequenting the Painted Hills subdivision located just east of Dubois. While the findings of the investigations were of little surprise, they certainly added to the database of scientific information regarding the herd and provided a prognosis for the future of bighorn sheep in Painted Hills.

Bighorn sheep tend to frequent Painted Hills beginning in late September and usually stay around until early to mid-May when they return to the badlands for lambing. The summer of 2024 has been a bit of an exception. Although the sheep did disappear for a bit in late May and early June, they returned in mid- to late June and frequented the area ever since. This could be attributable to any number of factors, including the drought being experienced and the subsequent effects to the availability of water and quality of available forage. Since October 2023, only 5.38" of total precipitation has been recorded in Dubois which is about half of the annual average. Shortly after making their June appearance, four lambs accompanied the herd. No lambs have been observed in the company of the adult ewes since July. And while these observations are anecdotal, they are certainly consistent with what's been occurring to the Painted Hills herd over the past several years. At least two of the ewes have been observed coughing chronically which is symptomatic of *M. ovi* and consistent with the findings of the Department.

While the observations throughout the summer are neither surprising nor encouraging, they are wholly consistent with the findings of the Department's investigations and certainly call into question the continued existence of that sub herd.

THANK YOU, SPONSORS!



Butler Family Foundation



Butler Conservation Education Fund Update

At the National Bighorn Sheep Center, we know conservation is a collective effort. Your gift to the Conservation Education Fund helps cultivate the future generation of: biologists, researchers, educators, and conservationists. We need 'ewe'!... Help us grow this fund to provide more outreach and education!

Your gift helps fund conservation efforts through...

- * Nature Tours
- * Camp Bighorn
- * Programs
- * Education Trunks
- * Group Visits
- * Lectures
- * Webinars
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Gifts of any amount make a difference! Gifts at the levels below will receive special acknowledgment on the National Bighorn Sheep Center website and at the annual banquet

- Ram \$5,000 & Up
- Ewe \$2,500 - \$4,999
- Lamb \$1,000 - \$2,499

In 2024 we doubled the Butler Conservation Education Fund from \$48,181 to \$96,485.



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John owns and operates The Personal Marketing Company (TPMC), a printing business which he and his wife, Elisabeth, built. John has the ability and philanthropic spirit to complete the *entire* mailing for the Center at no cost.

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10 Bighorn Lane
P.O. Box 1435
Dubois, WY 82513
info@bighorn.org
307.455.3429

Mission

The National Bighorn Sheep Center provides education and outreach for the national conservation of wild sheep, wildlife, and wild lands.