

Appendix H

ACTION ITEMS

Habitat

- Provide letters of support/encouragement to agencies to implement planned bighorn sheep habitat treatments including burning, logging, mechanical, spray (herbicide and fertilizer, etc.(as listed in Appendix 1).
- Seek Congressional assistance/oversight/funding for projects.
- Seek to obtain a different interpretation of guidelines to allow use of prescribed burning and herbicide application for noxious weed control in areas designated as wilderness.

Transplant/Augmentation/Population Management

- Augment “struggling, core native bighorn sheep herds through transplants.
 - o Eg. Targhee Herd, Dubois Badlands, Wind River Mountains (WRIR).
- Develop alternative source bighorn sheep herds for transplants, with disease sampling to establish a herd health history.
 - o Eg. Jackson Herd/Gros Ventre, South Fork of Shoshone River.
- Cooperatively review bighorn sheep transplant proposals (see Appendix 2 - *pending*).
- Seek regulatory authority to allow population management of bighorn herds through female harvest (to better manage population density of bighorns).

Interaction of Domestic/Bighorn Sheep

- Identify and map *Emphasis, Nonemphasis, Cooperative Review, and Unsuitable* areas for bighorn sheep (see map - *pending*).
- Develop “*a priori*” agreements between Game and Fish and individual permittees on control measures for bighorn and/or domestic strays.
- Encourage prompt notification of co-mingling of bighorn and domestic sheep.
- Initiate prompt capture (i.e., alive first, dead if necessary) of “strays” (bighorn and domestic) known, suspected or with potential of co-mingling.

Management of Grazing Allotments

- Explore opportunities for exchanges of allotments or areas of use between sheep and cattle permittees to maintain or increase domestic sheep AUM’s.
- Cooperatively review proposals for change in livestock use that may affect bighorn sheep
- Encourage the management of wildlife and wild horses at established management objective levels.
- Seek to extend non-use for personal convenience from 3 to 5 years on National Forest permits at 70% of permitted numbers (versus current 90%).
- Seek to allow grazing of non-owned livestock controlled by Forest Service permittees.
- Identify and analyze vacant/closed allotments on Wyoming’s National Forests for suitability for livestock grazing.

- Identify range and vegetation improvements to benefit domestic sheep which reduce opportunities for interaction with bighorn sheep.
- Send letters to agencies to encourage implementation of range improvements and vegetation treatments to benefit domestic sheep.
- Recommend increases in permitted use where the capacity exists.
- Support effective predator control.
- Send letters of support to establish “rest” based on site-specific vegetative responses following disturbance, and to identify alternate grazing opportunities on existing permitted allotments.

Public Outreach

- Cooperatively develop signage, articles/press releases, etc. explaining the need for and benefit of vegetation manipulation (for both wild and domestic sheep).
- Cooperatively develop signage, articles/press releases, etc. explaining the concern about co-mingling of domestic and bighorn sheep, encouraging the public to report interaction between the two species.

Definitions of 3 Categories of Bighorn Sheep Areas

1) Bighorn Sheep Emphasis Areas

- a. These are the highest priority areas for bighorn sheep management.
- b. These include core native bighorn herds in the Teton, Absaroka, Gros Ventre and Wind River Ranges (see map).

2) Bighorn Sheep Non-emphasis Areas

- a. These are the lowest priority areas for bighorn sheep management.
- b. These include the Wyoming, Salt River and Bighorn Ranges (see map).
- c. No effort will be made to prioritize/emphasize bighorn sheep.
- d. No attempt will be made to reintroduce bighorn sheep
- e. Any existing bighorn sheep populations will not be protected at the expense of domestic sheep grazing.

3) Cooperative Review Areas

- a. These are the areas of suitable bighorn sheep range where proposed changes in bighorn sheep management or domestic sheep use will be cooperatively evaluated.
- b. This includes suitable bighorn sheep range in Wyoming not addressed in the emphasis or non-emphasis areas (see map).
- d. Cooperate in these areas to seek/implement practices benefiting one or both species.

4) Unsuitable Bighorn Sheep Range

- a. Areas not identified under 1, 2 or 3 (see map).

Appendix 1 – Identified Bighorn Sheep Habitat Improvements – Statewide

I. Cody WGFD Region:

- Prescribed burns on Jim Mountain/North Fork Shoshone River/Elk Fork (HAs 2,3): 1,100-1,600 acres total
- Chemical/mechanical/biological control of Dalmatian toadflax on South Fork Shoshone River (HAs 3,4,5): 2,000+ acres total
- Prescribed burns on South Fork Shoshone River (HAs 3,4): 300-400 acres total
- Prescribed burns on Wood River (HA 5): 500-800 acres total

II. Jackson WGFD Region:

- Prescribed burns in Hoback River drainage (HA 7): 4,000-7,000 acres total
- Prescribed burns and noxious weed control in Cache Creek/Flat Creek area (HA 7): 4,000-6,000 acres total
- Prescribed burns in lower Gros Ventre River (HA 7): 2,000-5,000 acres total
- Prescribed burns in Teton Range (HA 6): 800-2,000 acres total
- Prescribed burns and other treatments (e.g., fertilization, baiting, salt blocks) in upper Green River, Osborne & Big Sheep Mountains, Clear Creek, White Creek (HAs 8,23): 2,000-3,000 acres total
- Prescribed burns in Middle Piney Creek/Darby Mountain (HA 24): 500 acres total

III. Lander WGFD Region:

- Prescribed burns, herbicide control of mat forming cushion plants, range pitting, meadow restoration on BLM Ridge, Noon Rock, Whiskey Mountain, Sheep Ridge, Torrey Rim, Rim Draw, Trail Lake (HAs 9,10): 1170-1350 acres total.
- Prescribed burns, opening up of migration corridors, water development in Red Canyon, Mexican Creek, Sinks Canyon, North Fork Popo Agie Canyon (HA 11): 550,000 acres total
- Prescribed burns on Ferris Mountains (HA 17): 1,000-1,500 acres total

IV. Laramie WGFD Region:

- Prescribed burns, timber management, fertilization, water development, etc. around Laramie Peak (HA 19): 178,560 acres total *[The committee felt a letter needed to be sent to BLM (Rawlins) strongly promoting this burn]*

V. Wind River Indian Reservation:

- East side of Wind River Canyon
- East side of Wind River Mountains (from Whiskey Basin south to reservation boundary).

VI. Other General Project Needs

- Prescribed burning inside designated wilderness is probably one of the highest priorities for maintaining/enhancing bighorn sheep habitat, but it is very difficult to implement with current wilderness management .
- Implement treatments with focus on transition and/or winter ranges
- Address habitat fragmentation; loss of migratory routes; and maintain or reestablish migration corridors
- Support large-scale projects that encompass multiple land ownerships
 - o Laramie Peak area
 - o Hoback River area
 - o North and South Forks of Shoshone River
- Timber removal where feasible and economical
 - o Encampment River Canyon
 - o Sinks Canyon
 - o North Fork Popo Agie Canyon
 - o Whiskey Basin
- Protection of winter ranges from recreational disturbance [*Send a letter to Regional Foresters*)
 - o Snowmachine use in Jedediah Smith wilderness, Tosi Basin
 - o Ice climbing on South Fork Shoshone River winter range